

# A STUDY OF YOGA

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JAJNESWAR GHOSH

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DEDICATED

*To*

*The Sacred Memory of My Parents*





## PREFACE

For whatever is valuable in the present volume, I am indebted to Sāṁkhya-Yogācāryya Śrīmat Swāmī Hariharānanda Āraṇya and to his excellent disciple, Śrīmat Swāmī Dharmameghaparakāśa Āraṇya. But for all that is weak or inconsequent in it, I am entirely responsible, as they had no opportunity of seeing it at any stage prior to completion or of discussing the various topics with special reference to my treatment of them. It is not indeed, implied that I had from them all that I knew of Yoga. A cursory glance at the following pages will show that almost every important source of information on the subject was freely drawn upon. But the materials thus obtained would have remained unsystematised and lifeless without their luminous discourses, the leading ideas of which were continually in my thoughts. My obligation to other thinkers is apparent throughout the work. But what is not so apparent is the abiding influence of these two great men, though it supplied the necessary stimulus during the years of study and preparation.

After this humble expression of gratitude to teachers who practise what they teach, I have to make my acknowledgments to good friends who helped me in various ways. From Rai Bhagavati Charan Kundu Bahadur, I got the idea of writing a book like this, and I had unstinted sympathy and encouragement from him while it was in progress. To Principal K. Zachariah, I am indebted for the kind loan of books from the Hugli College Library and to Mr. Srigopal Banerji, the Librarian, for the readiness with which he complied with my requests. My special thanks are due also to Pandit Vijay Kṛṣṇa Sāṁkhyatīrtha for valuable assistance received while I was studying the *Tattva-Vaiśārādī*.

Some apology is perhaps needed for the use of words belonging to common parlance to denote the concepts of Yoga. Another course was open to me, viz., that of coining new terms for their adequate expression. But it would have added to the difficulty of the subject and thus defeated my purpose which was to render it intelligible to the ordinary reader. So

I picked up words that seemed in their best application to approach such highly technical terms as *puruṣa*, *prakṛti*, *bhūta* and *samādhi*. I could not, of course, divest them of all irrelevant associations. But even the staunch advocate of a special terminology would find, could he make up his mind to read the book through, that the selected words have been so defined in course of the exposition as to prevent confusion of thought.

37, Barrack Road,  
Chinsura, (Bengal).  
August 1, 1933.

JAJNESWAR GHOSH

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## CHAPTER I

### THE SCOPE AND SPIRIT OF YOGA

#### 1. *Yoga and Science*

Apologists of Yoga love to dwell on the remarkable manner in which some of the latest generalisations of science were anticipated and strung together into a system in it. But they do it more harm than good in thus diverting attention from features of perennial interest to accidental points of contact with other departments of knowledge. Science differs radically in its outlook from philosophical speculations, and so the avenues of approach to its specific problems are not the same as those which philosophy chooses for itself. Yet a certain measure of similarity may be apparent in their findings when they are engaged in discussing border questions. But neither will care to be judged by such superficial resemblance in results in view of the wide divergence in their scope and interest.

We have today a plurality of sciences, each of which examines a particular aspect of the world of facts and expects the rest to complete the account. In studying, for instance, heat or chemical affinity or number, it attends not to the complex fulness of actuality but to a certain strand of it, which is mentally isolated for convenience of research and exposition. Moreover, as the constituent thus picked up exists only in so far as it is apprehended or believed to be apprehensible by the mind, science simplifies matters once more by ignoring the subjective element in its make-up, just as philosophy ignores the part played by the eye in ordinary judgments on visible objects. So there is a twofold abstraction in science, and though in certain recent theories, investigators have been driven by the implications of their facts to invade one another's proper spheres, yet the

\* It is not difficult to lay one's finger on passages in the *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* which refer to conservation of energy or to the relativity of time and space or reduce matter to vibratory motion. And it is easier still to point to passages which state that mind is co-extensive with life or illustrate the mechanism that there is in thought and conduct or stress the influence of subliminal impressions on every form of conscious activity.



generalisations are frankly recognised by all of them as more or less hypothetical.

Philosophy deals on the other hand with the world of experience as a whole, that is to say, without pulling it to pieces and examining the fragments in isolation. It is true that analysis is its method at the outset as it is in science. But its ambition is to work up from the materials thus obtained to a pinnacle of synthesis from which they may appear as essential factors of an organic unity. To discover the *necessity* of things is, in other words, its object, and so when it undertakes an analytical survey of the entire field of enquiry, its attention is directed less to the things themselves than to the manner in which they happen to be connected with one another in the scheme of phenomenal existence. That connection it holds, as a working hypothesis, to be intimate and not external, and it proceeds to verify the hypothesis by tracing a universal coherence of parts or correlation of principles. Even so it may focus one set of facts after another for expository convenience of accuracy of observation. But it never loses sight of the guiding doctrine that there is a systematic though complex interplay among them.

Should we then define it as the science of sciences and characterise its speculations as attempts to reconcile their partial syntheses and to comprehend them in wider generalisations? Some of the modern systems of philosophy answer to such a definition as they originated in scientific curiosity and levied tribute from the various sciences to secure materials for their constructive work. But it misses the mainspring of Indian philosophy in general and of Yoga in particular, which tried, according to its lights, to answer questions like the following—What is the cause of suffering that appears to be coeval with experience? How may life be so directed as to pass out of its pernicious influence? Questions like these arose out of the depths of divine prompting, and the answers candidly admitted the unsatisfyingness of the phenomenal world and suggested a way of escape out of it.

There may be some slight inaccuracy in characterising the motive which inspired this philosophical enquiry as ethico-religious, if we take the ordinary acceptations of 'ethics' and 'religion'. But its results claimed to disclose out only what was

but also what ought to be, and they were preached as truths by the light of which one could obtain deliverance from the meshes of illusion and trouble. And all this it was able to accomplish because, instead of limiting itself to the immediate foreground of disappointing facts, it dwelt just as much and with even more earnestness on the remote perspective of high ideals. Its message linked, therefore, practical with theoretical interests; and we miss the best part of it if we ignore the practical bearing in the glamour of certain splendid generalisations which stand to its credit.

The truths of science draw no such supplemental significance. You may turn them to account in a hundred different ways or they may be altogether barren of practical results. But the difference is of no moment to science or to the genuine scientist. The observations, for instance, of Professor Elliot Smith on the antiquity of Lloyd's Skull and the age and physical constitution of its original possessor will, in all probability, never lend themselves to exploitation in the ordinary way. But nonetheless will they form an important landmark in the history of anthropology. A system, however, like Yoga cannot be fairly judged except as a reasoned answer to doubts and misgivings that indicate the need of a thorough overhauling of our scheme of life. A certain interest may, indeed, be allowed to adumbration of scientific truths and exposure of scientific heresies in it, but that interest is slight when compared with what belongs to it as a serious attempt to teach mankind how to avoid the vicious movement from desire to satisfaction and from satisfaction to a fresh desire.

There are other reasons for not setting much store by the scientific scaffolding of this system of thought. The methods of arriving at conceptual shorthands are not the same in philosophy and science and consequently expressions which are common to them often disguise a real difference in the things signified. Nature, for instance, is more comprehensive or less material in Yoga than it is in the physical sciences. Its atoms are products of both mind and matter unlike the particles which are supposed to have built up the world in blind obedience to certain rigid laws of their own. And the relativity which it ascribes to time is certainly more significant than that which is established by a series of intricate mathematical calculations, as instead of leaving

us very much where we are, it indicates a way of feeling towards life and the world, which, if accepted, is bound to have far reaching influence on our conduct. To put the thing generally, its principles claim to be living truths and not ineffectual statements of abstract theories. And you cannot judge it fairly except with reference to this claim.

Lastly, the widest generalisations of science are not the surest things in it. For they have been occasionally revised and even abandoned while less general principles have maintained their ground in spite of the change in regime. Thus the emission theory of light made room for the undulatory theory without upsetting the laws of reflection and refraction. Hence scientists regard them not as final resting places but as convenient starting-points for fresh investigation. And owing to their range, the chances are not inconsiderable of their having to face recalcitrant facts. Yet these are the only generalisations of which we find transcripts in philosophy, and there they put on an air of absoluteness or necessity which is not warranted by the extent of observation on which they are based. So we are bad friends to philosophy if in our undiscerning zeal we overstress its anticipation of scientific theories of such provisional stability. After all, there can be no genuine greatness in it which does not spring from its interest as a record of spiritual experiences.

The truth is that while both science and philosophy start, as they must, from experience, they move on divergent paths indicated by their respective objects. And if an *entente* appears here and there between them, it is more in the nature of an external adjustment than of an intimate synthesis. Each is virtually autonomous and should recognise the autonomy of the other to avoid confusion of thought. But a scientific character may be claimed for the manner in which Yoga handles facts that have been since appropriated by psychology and ethics. It does not transcend the limits recognised by descriptive psychology in its analysis of the mind. Its observations on the nature and conditions of perceptual life are broad-based on facts. The rules for self-culture that it lays down show a profound insight into the problems of practical psychology. Its examination of the concepts of substance, attribute and time exhibits the scientist's attitude of indifference towards notions that cannot stand the test of criticism. And

generally speaking, it proceeds from the palpable to the abstract, meeting objections on the way not by appeals to authority and tradition but by arguments of its own. Thus so far as it is on ground common to itself and science, it illustrates the possibility and even the importance of applying to philosophy certain broad principles of method which have answered in the latter.

## 2. ✓ *Yoga and Transcendent Powers*

Another claim put forward in its favour is that by the consistent practice of its maxims, powers of mind and body may be developed which are generally believed to be beyond man's rank and condition as finite intelligence wedded to a corporeal frame of very limited receptivity and capacity for action. These powers are, indeed, held to belong to his original endowment so that yogic discipline acts very much like the chemicals which are used in the art of photography to make a latent picture visible. The scope of the present essay forbids canvassing the merits of this claim in detail, and there is moreover an obvious risk in relying for a proper appraisal of them on knowledge that is merely from the outside. Yet some reference to the principles involved appears to be required for deciding whether there is any ground for justification for the aloofness which has been maintained towards it by cautious students of philosophy on the assumed absurdity of this pretension. Broadly speaking, there are two questions to be answered for clearing the ground *viz.*, whether the principles and practice of Yoga are intimately related to the belief in the possibility of acquiring supernatural powers and whether the belief itself, when properly set forth, is altogether unreasonable.

The self-culture advocated by Yoga is based on its interpretation of our ordinary life as a continuous effort to relate ourselves by way of knowledge and activity to things that are foreign to us. This adjustment becomes more and more complex as a result of our ever-renewed attempts. But owing to the mutability and finitude of the objects to which we relate ourselves, this increasing intimacy of association spells increasing misery for us. Our salvation lies, therefore, not in multiplying points of contact with things so volatile but in abjuring every kind of connection, be it of knowledge or acquisition, with them. Such is the

message of Yoga, and it cannot be construed as an exhortation to acquire transcendent powers by following its precepts.\* It holds, indeed, that the mind can be so improved by its discipline as to be capable of reaches of thought and forms of activity which are beyond the possibilities of ordinary men. But nowhere does it suggest that these should be utilized for harnessing the forces of Nature to our service. It states on the other hand that extraordinary powers may be the ruin of the unwary seeker after spirituality, if they deflect him from his original purpose.

But the question still remains whether such an ideal expansion of knowledge is within the limits of possibility. Our susceptibility to impressions appears to be very limited, and the limits are said to be not very wide of our capacity for reducing them to intelligible forms. So there seems to be some excuse for holding that our experience-content cannot be indefinitely extended, defined as it must always be by our sensibility and our power of working up the materials obtained through it. Certain scientists would even go so far as to assert that we are already in possession of a general outline of the entire field of knowledge. But recent investigations into the nature of parapsychical phenomena have disturbed this dogmatic serenity and led people to suspect that the line has yet to be drawn between

\* Professor Radhakrishnan observes that Yoga did not feel prepared to cut off all connection with its surroundings and so incorporated elements which did not belong to its inmost being, and that this spirit of accommodation is responsible for the miscellaneous character of the system which exhibits a medley of low naturalism and high idealism. This is, indeed, cavalier treatment of Yoga, and it appears strange as the Professor's animadversion on the training for occult powers is but a paraphrase of one of the *sūtras*. He says that "the signs and wonders which the uncultured seek after, even if well authenticated, possess no spiritual value." (*Indian Philosophy*, vol II. p. 368) And the *sūtra* referred to is that "they are regarded as perfections by the undisciplined mind, but are serious obstacles to spiritual meditation" (III. 37). Vijñāna-Bhikṣu hits off correctly the scope and spirit of the system in the third section of his *Yogasārasaṃgraha*, when he says that some account of these extraordinary attainments is necessary in order to enable the devotee to see that they have no proper place in the spiritual life. But the conclusive statement on this question is *sūtra* III. 50, according to which salvation may be attained only after even omniscience and omnipotence have ceased to be prized.

what may and what may not be perceived through the senses. And he must be a bold man, indeed, who would set inelastic bounds to the ability of the human intelligence to filter higher truths from the data that they supply. For speculative and practical achievements which would have been pronounced impossible in an earlier age are today accomplished facts.

Now these achievements have been due in the main to a succession of extraordinary workers, who gave the start and won the highest triumphs in their respective generations. No law of averages will enable you to take their measure, nor can you account by the principle of heredity for their penetrating insight into the secrets of Nature, which needed but the merest of accidents to spring into full vigour. You may call it instinct, as it was called by a writer who waged unrelenting war against every form of mysticism. But you fly in the face of science itself when you ignore what such men did and how they did it in determining what human intelligence is capable of accomplishing. The truth about it is that the marvellous progress of science and thought has been due less to the slow, snail-like pace of men who moved from fact to fact than to the intuition of those rare individuals who comprehended entire provinces of Nature at a glance or plumbed metaphysical depths which are hidden from the gaze of ordinary mortals.

The following words of the author just referred to are a frank admission of the inadequacy of our matter-of-fact ways of mapping out the possibilities of the human mind. "The child", says Huxley, "who is impelled to draw as soon as it can hold a pencil; the Mozart who breaks out into music as early; the boy Bidder who worked out the most complicated sums without learning Arithmetic; the boy Pascal who evolved Euclid out of his consciousness; all these may be said to have been impelled by instinct as are the beaver and the bee." And he would have ascribed to a similar instinct the success of men like Newton and Faraday.\*

Huxley leaves the problem here, but Yoga offers an explanation which is quite consistent with its principles. There is, according to it, an infinite capacity for knowledge and

\* Huxley, *Aphorisms and Reflections*, p. 39

constructive work in the human mind. But it is confined within narrow channels by innate and acquired habits and by certain phenomena like the passions which are more or less pathological in character. When these are eliminated, the suppressed powers become active without further ado, just as water flows freely into an adjoining field when the barrier separating them has been removed. Men are sometimes born without some of these drawbacks, while in others they may be put out of the way by a sound system of education. And where the elimination is fairly complete, the limits of objective apprehension are so extended as to admit impressions not ordinarily attended to, which again the unfettered faculties work into intelligible forms with the sureness and rapidity of intuition.

Yoga does not claim that transcendent powers are always acquired by submitting to its discipline. It is only those who require minute and thorough knowledge of the phenomenal world for a complete and abiding conviction of its vanity who take the long route to disenchantment, picking up by the way certain occult virtues that excite the wonder and admiration of the worldly-minded. Others more happily constituted want only a general knowledge of phenomenal existence to convince them that the springs at which they must quench their thirst for its good things are always more or less poisoned. And as their tenacity of purpose is proof against the lure of glory, an elaborate or many-sided training is not needed by them. \* It is stated, indeed, that when they have completed the training that they require, they too attain a level of intellectual eminence from which nothing is too subtle or complex or remote for their comprehension, and that at this level the difference between the theoretical and the practical, relative as it is even in ordinary experience, tends to disappear. But here an ideal of excellence is declared to be the last reward of a perfect education from which, constituted as we are, we are still at an immeasurable distance. So we run no risk of being embarrassed with omniscience and omnipotence in the near future by our manifestly imperfect acceptance of the yogic principles. He alone who

*Vyāsa-Dhāya*, III. 55 is explicit on this point, for it says that liberation may be won without transcendent knowledge and ability as the *sine qua non* is the burning up of those notions and impulses that cause suffering.

can look on life with perfect unconcern, regarding its joys and sorrows, its hopes and fears as alike irrelevant, is fit to comprehend the spectacle in its entirety. But self-alienation of this sort is far, indeed, from any measure of selflessness that we are likely to attain at present.

The issue has been confused by the unenlightened zeal of those who believe and assert that the yogi's career is always rendered glorious by a dazzling chain of miracles. Of miracles conceived as arbitrary reversals of the order of Nature, he knows nothing, and he repudiates the very idea of performing them as positively impious. But he holds at the same time that our knowledge of things and their behaviour in different circumstances is far from being adequate and that a fuller comprehension may, therefore, enable a man to tap the energy locked up in them in ways that will appear startling to us. He holds also that a remarkable accession of knowledge and consequently of power may be looked for from concentration of the mind on certain objects. And with the principle underlying this contention there can be no quarrel, as concentration has been always the masterkey for unlocking the secrets of Nature. Moreover, even if the adequacy of the methods suggested is questioned, it cannot affect the central position of Yoga that transcendent powers, however acquired, are to be dreaded rather than desired, as they may undermine that singleness of purpose which is necessary for success in the quest of spirituality. It is unfortunate, therefore, that a mere side-issue has been so often stressed in discussing the merits of Yoga as a system of philosophy and a code of morals.\*

\* Max Muller suggests that the *Samādhi-Pāda* (first chapter) of the *Yoga-Sūtras* might have formed a complete work by itself as it gives the drift of the system in its simplest form, and that the third chapter which treats of extraordinary powers marks the transition from rational beginnings to irrational exaggerations, from intellectual to practical Yoga. And he observes in this connection that the belief in miracles originated in what Patañjali describes as a forecast of the future from a knowledge of the present and the past, that the step was easy from the prediction of recurrent events to that of other events as well and that prophets soon began to outbid one another till the small ball of superstition grew, as it rolled on, into an avalanche. — *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 347, 349 and 354. Here we have a correct account of the decline of faith and growth of parasitic



### 3. *Yoga and Quietism*

We come now to those who have found fault with the outlook and drift of Yoga on the ground that they do not square with our most cherished convictions and impulses. Criticism like this may be lightly brushed aside in science which furnishes conceptual short-cuts to facts without waiting to determine their utility. But a philosophy like Yoga claims to vitalise experience by indicating a plan and purpose that ought to run through it in response to the universal demands of human nature. Hence logical congruity is not enough, and its bearing on faith and conduct has to be taken into account in determining its value.

An elementary caution is needed, however, in judging it with fairness. Experience is not confined to what we get on the busy thoroughfares of the world and within the quiet domestic circle, while the discontent with which we often accept what we get in these spheres raises the suspicion that we must look elsewhere for the satisfaction of our deepest needs. Besides, the history of civilisation has much to say about the men who left the beaten track in creed and conduct and laid out new paths which became highways for posterity. So it is unreasonable to assume that philosophy can never be trusted out of the leading-strings of the prevalent faith and practice or that if it ventures to legislate for the race, it must do so on the basis of the common desires of men. Such an assumption seems to lurk, however, in much of the criticism that is given below.

William James observes that Hindu thinkers were driven to philosophy by a poor-spirited distrust of the chances of things. They wanted to give up, to be wiped out of existence rather than roll on the high seas of the world. And their wish was father to their thought. Reality was denied to the bewildering accidents of life and to the unwelcome adventures into which they flung human beings, while peace and rest were hypostatised and union with this abstraction was conceived as the highest bliss.\* These thinkers were, according to

substitutes for it. But the third chapter is an emphatic protest against such a substitution in certain *sūtras*, while others stress the value of practice and concentration even though they adopt current notions about the attainment of occult powers to illustrate it.

\* William James, *Pragmatism*, p. 291.

him, afraid of experience and unwilling to accept a 'fighting chance of safety' and glad enough, therefore, to seek shelter in a religious optimism which, however, was too idyllic to accord with facts. He has some measure of distant admiration for their ideal, but he would at the same time teach a sturdier race to look askance at systems that bore in his opinion the impress of practical weakness.

These thinkers, however, were not exactly afraid of phenomenal existence; they were sick of it on mature reflection, disgusted, that is to say, with its pettiness, with the brand of inadequacy that was on its highest manifestations. Thought and activity, they argued, were always cut up by time and conditioned by what was beyond them. No exception could be made in favour of exalted piety and immaculate conduct, for even these were defined or coloured by the occasions which called them forth. And as the occasions themselves would vary from time to time, the stain of mutability as well as of limitation was on the noblest things in life. This was expressed by saying that even the gods were victims of circumstances and that, therefore, only inferior natures could envy them their lot. James does not clearly state what his 'fighting chance of safety' amounts to. But if it means the prospect of endless fighting relieved by a victory at every turn, then however stimulating it may be to certain temperaments, the Hindu philosophers would have repudiated it at once not because they lacked the necessary athletic trim, but as it was incompatible with that inward tranquillity and completeness which they hoped to attain by their high-hearted indifference to the good things of life.

Deliverance from misery was, no doubt, the object that Yoga and allied systems set before themselves. But misery must be taken in an extended sense to comprehend the full import of their ideal. For were it no more than the felt want of material and social goods, they committed the inexplicable error of recommending the longest route to their goal when they prescribed a discipline which requires unintermittent watch over every form of human frailty and willing surrender of every opportunity of courting sympathy and encouragement that so often take the sting out of privation and discomfort. The nature of this discipline will be discussed in the last chapter. So all that need be

stated here is that its extreme severity may refrigerate the stoutest heart among the stalwart champions of practical efficiency, involving as it does stretches of unrelaxed effort which in their range make a commonplace event of death itself. For the yogī did not believe that a few years of patience or even active goodness in the dust of human trials could buy eternal immunity from all sorts of troubles. He was prepared, on the other hand, to face thousands of lives and to fling away at the same time all that made life enjoyable so that he might weed out those pretensions and passions which would by maintaining the connection with what was external prevent him from attaining self sufficiency and repose. So his was an instance not of lack of courage but of a radically different outlook. He chose after an examination of contending claims to adapt himself to a supersensible reality and to effect this adjustment by an increasing aloofness from the world of fleeting shows.

To regard this aloofness as akin to hibernation is to ignore common experience and the teaching of psychology. Even passing desires demand for their inhibition some expenditure of energy and some amount of thinking to set that energy in motion. So almost incredible efforts must be required to weed out those instincts and impulses that appear to be deep as life. And the yogī had no illusions in the matter when in order to ensure the purity of the inner tone he decided to abjure contact in thought as well as deed with whatever lay outside him. To leave home and retire to a forest, to part with possessions and friends were comparatively simple things. The real difficulty came when in solitude and without any work to occupy or interest him he tried to repress systematically all thoughts of the world he had left behind and all those restless longings with which he had been too familiar. But he was nerved by the conviction that worthy efforts left traces behind, which formed and strengthened good habits and weakened the passions.\* Still his

\* Mental facts are broadly classed for purposes of discipline under two heads, according as they rivet the bonds of finitude and temporality or smooth the way to spiritual insight and ultimate liberation. It is obviously the interest of every individual to multiply the latter and thus reduce the pernicious influence of the former. But is it within his power to move along this line to the goal? Vācaspati Miśra gives pointed expression to

must have been a more strenuous life than that of the man of action as it meant ascent to higher and higher levels unrelieved at any stage by movement along a smooth and straight road.

Activities were classed by him under four heads, viz., those which were positively bad, those in which good and evil were mixed in various proportions, those, again, which were good without any admixture of evil and lastly those which could be called neither good nor bad because they did not affect the agent's relation to his environment.\* The first belonged to depraved natures that wrought nothing but mischief to themselves and others. The second included the work of the vast bulk of mankind that did things productive in the long run of both weal and woe. The third were due to superior beings who won through them felicities which were limited indeed in measure and bounded by time but were unalloyed with grosser elements. But the fourth could be looked for from those alone who had nothing to dread or expect from their surroundings and in whose nature, therefore, the spiritual element was not weakened by any worldly temper. The work of such men was, no doubt, less obtrusive than that of the rest, but it was not less intense, since it aimed at lifting life to a higher plane of power whence material and social attachments could be permanently dropped.

James is right when he says that this freedom from complications was sought under the pressure of an incorrigible aversion to pain. But he is wrong in taking this motive as an indication of morbidity or mouldiness. The hero flings away his life on the battle-field because the thought of his country's ruin causes him

this doubt and then removes it. All living creatures, says he, are driven by appetites and desires, and if ever a good impulse finds a place in the stream of unholy thoughts and cravings, what chance, he asks, has it of maintaining its ground against them? What chance, again, is there of its making room for absolute passionlessness? And he answers the misgiving by saying that reverent study of the Scriptures, just inference and proper attention to what is taught by competent teachers enable a man to practise steadfastness and detachment. That this is possible shows that good impulses are not always submerged or transformed by bad ones. In fact, a Brahmin does not become a hunter by merely living in *Śālagrām*, a village inhabited mainly by savage hunters. — *Tattvavaiśaradī*, I. 5.

\*The technical names are *kṛsna* (black) *śukla-kṛsna* (white and black), *śukla* (white) and *aśukla-akṛṣṇa* (neither white nor black). See *Yājñasa-Bhāṣya*, IV. 7.

more pain than the apprehension of death. The saint decides to die to testify to his faith because recantation or the surrender of his principles appears intolerably painful. And there was no more of mouldiness in the yogī than in these when he elected to strive for emancipation from the flesh because he could not endure the evils that flesh was heir to. The painful and the pleasurable are names respectively of what we dislike and what we welcome, and so there is no point in the mere statement that he tried to eliminate pain from his scheme of life. Your judgment must depend on the nature of the interests that he decided to sacrifice to purchase this immunity for himself and on the steadiness with which he pursued his end. But in these respects the yogī had an obvious advantage over others, for he resolved to part with pleasures as well as pains because they appeared to obscure his spiritual vision, and he maintained the right fighting shape throughout instead of exhibiting that spirit of compromise which is the besetting weakness of the worldly-wise.

There are parables illustrative of the indomitable will and inalienable faith that Yoga looked for or tried at any rate to foster in its followers, two of which are given below. A couple of partridges, so runs one of them, lived on the sea beach and kept their unfledged offsprings in a nest not far from the high water-mark. But on a certain day while they were out in quest of food for the family, the wind was high and the sea was rough so that the tossing waves destroyed and swept away the fragile tenement with the helpless creatures in it. The parent birds saw on their return the havoc that had been wrought in their absence, and they decided to approach the sea-god for redress. He heard their plaintive story and then laughed in scorn. The waves had rolled and danced at the bidding of the winds, and what, after all, did it matter if in their sportive mood they had ruined two such insignificant things? His logic, however, was not appreciated by these stupid creatures and so they laid their case before the king of the gods in the hope of obtaining justice at his hands. He heard their prayer and then sagely observed that, as it had received the fullest consideration from the sea-god, he could find no good reason for interfering in their favour. They approached next the dreaded ruler of departed spirits, who jealously guarded his subjects within his cheerless territory. But

his answer was that by a divine decree none might cross the frontiers of his dominions after having entered it in the orthodox fashion, so that bereavement on earth could in no case be regarded as extraordinary or worthy of exceptional treatment. They had enough experience now of the ways of the gods; and despairing of fair treatment from such exalted beings, they resolved to do what they could for themselves. They returned, therefore, to the desolate sea-shore not to bewail their hapless fate but with hearts bent on revenge, since revenge appeared sweet in their misfortune. They sat accordingly near the water, sucked in a few drops at a time and spilt them on the hot sand to dry up. Thus the sea-god had another opportunity for a hearty laugh over the evident futility of their retaliatory measure. But they were not in a mood to profit by his scornful comment. They went on with their work till worn out by hunger and age and the inconsolable grief in their breast they died. But the spirit that had possessed them in their bereavement did not die at the same time. It took appropriate shape, reappeared as a couple of partridges on the beach and continued the work of retribution which they had commenced. A million lives were thus devoted to the same object, and at last the sea-god felt the keen edge of their wrath. Why, his watery domain had shrunk to half of its original dimensions owing to their petty but persistent attempt to punish him for his heartlessness ! And unless they were appeased, he would in course of time be as homeless as they. So he took counsel with the king of the gods, and both of them went to the lord of the deceased and persuaded him to part with the offsprings of the partridges who thus won back by their unaided effort what the sense of justice of the gods had denied them. Such must be the tenacity of purpose of the yogī in the face of difficulties which are generally believed to be insuperable.

The other parable is that a sage, who was equally liked in heaven and on earth, was on a certain day going to pay his respects to the Deity when he chanced to meet under a tall tamarind tree an ascetic who had been apparently long at his devotions. The latter requested him to enquire and report how many years or lives must pass before he could obtain salvation. The sage promised compliance and came back with the answer

that as many lives as there were leaves on the tamarind tree must be devoted to the service of God before the end so eagerly sought could be attained. The ascetic heard the decree with evident satisfaction. What were a thousand lives or even many thousands of them as against the boundless expanse of eternity ? He would gladly work and wait for his deliverance, though judged by ordinary measures of remoteness he must wait long. Such should be the enlightened optimism of the yogī while he is striving to realise his ideal of purity.

It has been held that the spotlessness, freedom and repose sought in Yoga may be won by working in the world with a view to convert its problems into occasions for spiritual advancement, that aloofness is inimical to our highest interest as we can transcend the limitations of phenomenal existence only by fully comprehending them and that we need not be of the world to be in it since, if our minds are properly attuned, we may without neglecting its affairs earn a peace not unlike the stillness in the heart of a storm-tost area. There is, no doubt, much to be said in favour of this view, and it appeals with special force to a certain class of thoughtful men. But the yogī does not accept it, and he offers a reasoned answer in support of his contention that while intellectual and moral goods of the highest kind may be secured by progress along the line indicated above, it cannot lead to that absolute independence and peace which alone will still all our longings. The limits of this treatise forbid a discussion of the merits of the contestants in such an important controversy. But it is necessary to observe that the issue is simply obscured by ascribing the yogī's standpoint to an instinctive dread of activity and strife. There is no weak-kneed submission in his creed to forces that are generally assumed to be beyond man's control, nor easy acquiescence in the existing order under the comfortable impression that all here is for the best. And if he asks us to renounce all forms of contact with what is foreign, it is because a stern logic has taught him to identify such contact with bondage. So the principle that he stands for is not an admission of weakness in the presence of overwhelming powers and much less is it a cry of despair.

James's tirade is directed specially against the great monistic

system of Vedānta as he speaks of absorption in the Absolute and compares the process to the disappearance of a drop of water in the sea. He speaks also with evident satisfaction of his own pluralistic creed and of his faith in the justice of the arrangement under which a proper price must be paid for salvation. How far he is just in treating Vedānta as the impassioned cry of care-worn and jaded natures for reconciliation and unity, we cannot stop here to enquire. But Yoga is certainly as pluralistic as any system can ever be, and it believes like him in a scheme of 'uncertified possibilities' so far as man's spiritual welfare is concerned. It holds also that this possibility becomes more and more of a probability only where there is a sustained and strenuous effort to settle into a new and more stable equilibrium than that which we find in the life of the ordinary man. His denunciation, however, is sweeping though it appears from certain passages elsewhere that he was conscious of difference in view-point among Indian systems.

A fuller knowledge of them would have convinced him that Yoga stresses more than his own system the claim of the individual to separateness. Both are alike in holding that the world is tenanted by an indefinite number of 'eaches', that it can be saved only in detail since they differ so widely in behaviour and that consequently there is no likelihood of its 'epic history getting short circuited' by some underlying one-ness which is only temporarily disguised by an apparent plurality of characters. In fact, Yoga is more explicit on this point when it asserts that this epic history had no beginning in time and can never come to an end because there are countless individuals to be saved and they advance with unequal eagerness and often along divergent lines. It is true that this parallelism cannot be pushed very far. But the difference between the two systems is even more significant as it shows that Yoga is farther from monism than his own doctrine in holding that individuals must work out their destiny in isolation while he trusts to some sort of co-operation among them and possibly with superior beings, who are working for the same object but on higher planes of existence.

Much in the same vein is the criticism of Huxley, who characterises the Indian aspiration to rise above the troubles and



miseries of life as unmanly flight from the battle-field.\* The proper attitude towards it is marked off at the same time as a settled decision to make much of the good in it and to face the evil with stout hearts. He does not, indeed, ask us to welcome the rebuffs that break up "earth's smoothness" on the assumption that they are blessings in disguise. But he would have us bear inevitable evils with becoming fortitude while striving to eliminate the rest by foresight and self-control. Such is his plan for the improvement of our 'little corners', and he believes in their progressive amelioration because the limits are wide of our capacity for comprehending the order of Nature and for modifying the course of events to suit our interests.

Yet his estimate of human life is deeply coloured with the sombre tints of pessimism. He knows too well that misery "knocks at our doors more loudly" than happiness and that "the prints of its heavy footsteps are less easily effaced". And he does not certainly minimise its withering influence, when he calls it "a match that never goes out" and says that it deprives existence of its savour by reducing its choicest flowers to dust and ashes. So the question arises what exactly he promises to himself and to others when he proposes to put up a sturdy fight with adverse circumstances and to cherish the admittedly insufficient and insecure good that may be gleaned out of them. It is, indeed, interesting to observe in this connection how closely he approximates to the position of Yoga when he repudiates the uncritical optimism of the man of science and of religion. 'The prospect', says he, 'of attaining untroubled happiness or of a state which can even remotely deserve the title of perfection, appears to be as mis-leading an illusion as ever was dangled before the eyes of poor humanity'. And he is equally outspoken in deprecating the garment of make-believe by which pious hands have hidden its uglier features. He concludes also that in this vortex of unrest and disappointment there is but one assurance, the assurance, namely, of peace, which, however homely it may appear to sanguine natures, is

\* Huxley, *Aphorisms and Reflections*, p. 113.

yet incomparably superior to the fleeting goods that they covet and pursue.

It is claimed, however, that in spite of similarity in outlook, Huxley's attitude towards life is saner and more honourable than that of the poor-spirited yogī, who "where it is hard to conquer learns to fly". The former speaks, indeed, of "the equal temper of heroic hearts", of men strong in will who prefer strenuous activity in discouraging circumstances to slothful ease. And he has in view the courage of the soldier who is prevented by the sense of honour from quitting the field even when the odds are obviously against him. A courage not unlike this is, in his opinion, the one condition of self-respect in a world which offers no prospect of a decisive victory over alien forces. But Yoga demands of its votaries courage of a superior order inasmuch as it has to be exhibited in life-long and unflinching adherence to a rule of conduct that proscribes all the joys of life for the sake of a distant ideal. The "passion of death" evoked by rare crises and shared with comrades or the self-possession shown in distress and danger that are felt to be temporary appears slight when compared with the deliberate submission to every form of privation and hardship out of devotion to an object which for ought that the yogī knows may be attained only after a succession of lives. You may find fault with his outlook if your interpretation of life happens to be different from his, though you cannot then acquit Huxley of error of judgment. But it is only the flippant superciliousness of those who approach great systems with made-up minds that will convict him of a pusillanimous craving for indolence and ease.

One may retort, in fact, with greater justice that Huxley betrays a lack of adequate intellectual grip over his facts when he asks us to make the best of a hopelessly bad bargain, that his counsel of qualified perfection is after all a counsel of despair. If life is predominantly evil and must always remain so in spite of our best efforts to improve it, then it is certainly neither irrational nor cowardly to devise and adopt a means of escape out of it. If, again, the suppression of phenomenal life opens the way to an existence that is independent of the mutable world of sense, then it is certainly the highest wisdom

to surrender for that existence its joys and sorrows, its lights and shades. Few, indeed, are fitted for such a complete self abnegation; but that does not militate against the rightness of such a course or establish the superiority of a compromise between conviction and practice. And such a compromise it is that Huxley advocates in deference to a common weakness of the race. Most of us have a remarkable power of letting our deepest thought follow a certain line of development and our practical life another, and it is only in rare moments of leisure and reflection that our faith comes into effective contact with our conduct. Moreover, the misgivings caused by the collision are temporary, as we thrust them aside to make room for a dogmatic optimism which is found to be convenient in the daily routine of life. But the yogi is consistent in his profession and practice. If his outlook on life is dark, he does not let convention or expediency blind him to the truth about it.

#### *4. Yoga characterised with reference to optimism and pessimism*

Pessimism, however, is not the last word in Yoga. The line is seldom clearly drawn between it and optimism, as both of them are loosely used as terms of abuse in philosophical and theological controversies. It is desirable, therefore, to define them with some measure of precision for a fair appraisal of the yogic interpretation of life. There is a type of optimism common to unreflecting men, who are prone to assume that all sorts of good things may be won by activity and that fortune is at least as often inclined to favour them as to thwart their efforts. This popular variety is almost a habit of thought with them and even if it is occasionally disturbed by untoward experiences, it soon resumes its sway. So they take the broad and beaten path without misgiving and fore-thought; but they are buoyant and bold because they have restricted their hopes and aspirations to what experience shows the worldly life will afford. Their 'reasonable contentment' is, therefore, the infallible sign of spiritual atrophy, though they rightly take it to be a condition of worldly success.

Religious optimism differs in character from the above in taking due account of evil and misery. But it is based on the assurance of Divine justice and mercy and of the triumph of

goodness, if not in this life, at any rate after life's brief day is over. Men are here tested by misery and tempted by evil and if they stand the test well, they are amply rewarded for their loyalty and constancy in a subsequent existence. Thus the vast disproportion between desert and award in this life is rendered tolerable by regarding it as the prelude in imperfect shape and on a relatively narrow stage of a grander process, presided over by Infinite Wisdom and Kindness, which can at present be only dimly conceived. And those who accept this creed find sometimes a certain delight in bitter experiences, which they believe will prove a medicine to them. But it may be asked why He who is perfection permits a process which is pointless by letting His creatures wander into sin and pain merely for experiencing subsequently the joy of deliverance.

An answer is offered by what may be called philosophical optimism because it is based on an examination of the relation between temptation and goodness. The latter is inconceivable, according to it, without an antecedent condition of evil, for we become holy only by overcoming the reverse of it in us. So the good world is not immanent but is only gradually built up by successive victories over what is bad. Thus the thesis that the Divine order is both good and triumphant is reconciled with the presence of so much sin and suffering in the world. The explanation describes correctly the nature of moral progress. But it touches only the fringe of the problem as the question remains whether evil impulses must continue to figure in our consciousness even when that progress is completed. Duality and strife belong obviously to a stage of transition, and one may not unreasonably ask why such a transition should have ever become a necessity.

Lastly, there is scientific optimism which has all the weight and authority of the modern theory of evolution on its side. It dwells with complacency on the doctrine that higher and higher forms of life have been evolved out of the lowest till the climax has been reached in the appearance of man. The remorseless process of natural selection has been operative, no doubt, throughout the advance; but natural selection drives man with a loose rein, allowing him opportunities of a many-sided development. Moreover, he becomes aware of his possibilities as he

grows and thus arrives at a stage at which the ideal of perfection seizes upon him and makes him work intelligently towards it. Self-conscious evolution has been marked, indeed, by many a blunder and oversight in the past; but the verdict of history is that the progress achieved so far has amply repaid the travail of development. And he is still in his infancy, so that a day of almost measureless length stretches before him with innumerable opportunities of improvement. In fact, he has just emerged from the greyneyness of the morning mists into the unstinted glory of broad daylight, and who can guess what his possibilities may be?

The first comment on this roseate picture is that it is of the future of the race and not of the individual. The thick-skinned and coarse-grained man often gets on best in the world, while sensibilities and virtues of the highest order are not seldom handicaps in the naked struggle for existence. And even where conditions are favourable, the thought and purpose of the majority and therefore of the mediocre act with compelling force in shaping history. So the species lives and thrives while its best specimens are not infrequently neglected if not ruthlessly sacrificed. And the species itself is environed by natural forces and conditions which are steadily though slowly moving towards a final collapse, so that it is bound to be ultimately crushed with its choicest creations beneath their "trampling march". This optimism seems, therefore, like pessimism misspelt to those who have not learnt by long and intense study to look upon the processes of Nature with a "superstitious eye of love".

The crudest form of pessimism is like popular optimism based on imperfect generalisation, and it is often the outcome and index of extreme selfishness which concludes that the world is dark because all lights are not focused on its way. When men of a reflective turn of mind accept this creed, they come to prefer contemplative sloth to an active and useful life, because nothing is so "dainty sweet" as uninterrupted melancholy. At the same time they justify their inaction and aloofness by their absurd pretensions to superior wisdom and holiness, while as a matter of fact the partition is thin between them and the cynic and misanthrope.

Religious pessimism encourages no sort of pretension, being based on a profound distrust of human nature, because it longs

always to know more and to possess more and thus converts life into a series of activities and cares, while the springs at which it quenches its thirst for knowledge and power are generally turbid. Hence the issues of life are held to be insignificant if not altogether illusory, and this is the essence of pessimism. The Divine order is accepted at the same time as real and supreme, and the apparent anomaly of misery, evil and death is explained by reference to our absorption in finite relations and objects. But why the Divine order allows such absorption is a mystery which must remain unveiled. It is God who knows and not the individual who suffers why he has been shut up in a nutshell and tormented by bad dreams. So life is not according to this creed, as it is in certain forms of religious optimism, an ennobling tragic spectacle in which we are permitted to take part so that we may purge ourselves of our weakness and folly. And the proper course, therefore, is to turn away from it for a rapt communion with God, since nothing but mystic union with His static perfection can provide an escape from the sufferings incidental to temporality and finitude. Such a creed has, however, no practical bearing in the ordinary sense, as it is based on the conviction that the world is a mere show with no purpose either of amusing or instructing behind it.

Philosophical pessimism cuts away from this sheet-anchor of faith without glozing over or minimising the evils of life. But its quarrel is not with the penalties of sin and stupidity which may be borne with fortitude, but with the capricious irrationality of the awards of fate, whose influence even on our spiritual nature is more or less controlling. It is this tragedy of blind destiny, this "weary dwelling cheek by jowl with the mocking demons of chance and absurdity" that is resented. The smiles and caresses of the world may be lightly dispensed with, but what cannot be endured are undeserved punishment and niggardly denial of opportunities for self-expression. An Almighty Being is said to preside over the course of events; but if He is present, He simply looks down in lofty peace on the perpetual change and dissatisfaction in this nether world. We do not feel His healing and renovating power, and it is, therefore, impossible to vindicate His attitude towards us. So long, indeed, as there is this vast disproportion between the demands of the

spirit and the realities of experience, optimism must be a shallow dodge or mean evasion fitted merely to generate a trashiness of moral fibre, and faith only a poor consolation since the nature of our experience here offers no rational warrant for a better state of things elsewhere. We should, therefore, cast them aside and try to be thoroughly veracious in thought and action in facing the grim realities of life. For this is the only way in which we can preserve self-respect and dignity despite the cruel jest played on us by Nature. So there is, according to this creed, "no salvation that may be lost and is hard to win", no sacrifice that ought to be made in view of a permanent and invaluable gain.

As already observed, the line is hard to draw between scientific optimism and scientific pessimism, and it depends really on the temperament of the thinker what conclusions he will draw from the facts before him. But all are agreed that the course of evolution does not justify millennial hopes, for not only is perfection never likely to be attained in the way of Nature, but decay as well as growth is a normal occurrence in it. Besides, the method of development which Nature follows is one which man can neither approve nor even willingly acquiesce in. The progress of reason is, indeed, represented sometimes as a "swelling harmony which gradually subdues discord and uses it to its own ends." But the discord is often the protest of superior reason, which is stifled by the dominant notes of expediency or prejudice. Man again, is ruled like all else by mechanical laws, which, however beneficent they may appear at present, are really heading for a cataclysm in which the noon-day brilliance of his intelligence is destined to extinction. So all that he can do is to cherish ere yet the end comes the noble ideas and purposes that animate his perishable clay.

The above is, no doubt, an imperfect account of typical interpretations of life, each of which is susceptible of a degree of refinement that meets partially, if not wholly, the objections to it. But inadequate as this account is, it will enable us to determine with some measure of precision the nature of the yogi's outlook. Mutation is, according to him, the law of the world, so that things which are agreeable at first suffer deterioration and become positively disagreeable in course of time. Moreover, there is no guarantee in the flux of circum-

stances that we shall remain in permanent possession of them, and hence enjoyment is seldom free from cares and troubles. At the same time it sharpens appetite instead of putting an end to it, and so past joys reappear as present cravings. Thus life even at its best is a "restless, longing, suffering good." Indeed, it could not be otherwise even if there was stability in the world outside, for the mind too is extremely mutable and so constituted as to give rise to a perpetual succession of joy, ennui and pain.\*

But if experiences admittedly delightful have pain as their concomitant as well as consequent, it follows that this grim reality must outweigh the pleasures of life. Yoga is, therefore, at one with philosophical and religious pessimism, while it joins issue with religious optimism in holding that evil is positive and often without any remedial value. And it arrives at this conclusion not by using a leaping-pole to jump over facts but by analysing and interpreting them without recoiling from any position that they involve. There are, indeed, thoughtless and thick-skinned men whose life is a continuous present without much reference to the future or the past, and who refuse to be aroused from their drugged slumber so long as the present is sweet. But it is otherwise with the yogī, to whom the random and transient pleasures that life affords are like flashes of light relieving momentarily a Cimmerian darkness.

But he differs from philosophical pessimism and seems to adopt the viewpoint of science when he says that nothing in this chequered existence of ours is arbitrary or accidental. He refuses, however, to allow an over-ruling influence to causes or

\* The three kinds of pain here referred to are known as *parināmaduḥkha*, *tāpaduḥkha* and *samskāra-duḥkha*.

The last consideration is stressed in the dialogue between Jaigīśavya and Āvatya given in *Bhāṣya*, III. 18. Jaigīśavya says that perfect contentment is regarded as unalloyed bliss only because it is an antidote to the suffering caused by desires, though as a mental state it too should be suppressed, for no state of the mind can be free from complexity and imperfection. Swāmi Hariharānanda says in this connection that isolation of the spirit is sought because empirical existence of even the most exalted order must mean pain in some form or other and that as the individual approaches this goal he experiences an ineffable bliss owing to the conviction that distractions are disappearing, but that even this bliss is ultimately cast aside as being, like other mental states, liable to fluctuation. — *Bhāṣyatī*, III. 18.



conditions that are mechanical or insentient, but adopting the reverse course accounts for the lowest factors of phenomenal existence by reference to what is highest in it. So character is regarded not as a particular factor alongside of and dependent on other factors but as the radical principle which determines and supports all of them. It reaps what it has already sown or builds up its future without assistance or obstruction though with materials that are gratuitously supplied by Nature. The ways of the world seem, indeed, to run counter to such a doctrine, as they disclose much that appears planless or accidental. But our observation is limited to the details of our present existence, while our congenital aptitudes and propensities indicate that it is but a link in a chain of lives. So there is some warrant for assuming that what we enjoy or endure in it without assignable moral causes, we have provided for in anterior existences by activities equal to these experiences.

Such is also the central principle of certain forms of religious optimism; but they regard the correspondence between desert and award as the expression of Divine Will. Yoga rejects, however, as needless this theory of external intervention as it holds that activities and their results must be akin to and commensurate with one another even in the moral world. Thus good deeds are naturally and necessarily productive of beneficial effects, while mischief is the inevitable outcome of those that are bad. At the same time as all activities are limited in character, only a limited good can be expected even from the best among them, so that there is an aftermath of bitterness even under the most favourable conditions. And generally speaking, pain attends and colours pleasurable experience, for the complexity of our ordinary behaviour entails such an intermingling of pleasure with pain. So it is impossible to eliminate pain from phenomenal existence though we may reduce its proportion by well-regulated conduct.

But is it not within our power to snap the fetters that we have forged and are still forging for ourselves? Such a deliverance may be won, according to religious pessimism, by sinking our finitude in a rapt contemplation of Divine excellence. And Yoga too attaches considerable importance to the chastening influence of such ecstatic moods in which the limitations of personal existence seem to melt away. Yet it is fully alive to

their weakness unless supplemented by a special training calculated to purify the heart and improve the intellect. And to prevent the neophyte from taking some imaginary glory for absolute perfection and thus grasping a shadow for the substance, it asks him to devote his days to the attainment of clearness of thought and a soul-stirring vision of the truth, the lack of which can never be made up by any amount of feeling. It holds, therefore, that where the intellectual outlook remains narrow, the devotee may fall into all sorts of illusions and excesses despite his religious fervour.

This outlook, however, is as much a moral as an intellectual achievement, for it is possible only to the pure in heart, the passions being always confused and inadequate. Hence measureless effort, depth beyond depth of exertion is needed, and even death has to be regarded not as a quietus but as the passage to a new set of conditions under which the training is to be continued. An attitude like this sets free probably stores of energy to which our ordinary motives and aspirations furnish no key and thus raises life to a new plane of power. It is different at any rate from sentimental quietism with its peculiar effeminacies. And yet the two have been often confounded, and the yogi's self-severity or high-hearted indifference to temporal concerns has been taken as proof positive of mouldiness or morbidity !

This indifference is based on the candid recognition of the presence of a real wrongness in the world, which unchastened optimism tries to ignore or evade. At the same time it has none of the bitterness of crude pessimism, which originates in personal disappointment and exhausts itself in unavailing complaints against the ways of gods and men. If there is evil in life, it must, according to the yogi, be squarely met and overcome by heroic fortitude. You cannot break its sting by dallying with pleasures or trying to increase them, because they often come by all sorts of accidents and fly as they come. And even where they may be commanded, you cannot divest them of the undesirable features that are due to their temporality and finitude.

But if life must be a mixed affair, should we not take our chances of the sweets and the bitters instead of quarrelling with our lot ? The yogi does not believe that life must be always such, and he prepares himself for an existence which he sees to

be possible though it must be radically different from any that he has experience of. For though error, weakness and suffering are unavoidable in the latter, yet he feels in the inmost depths of his being that the spring of eternity and eternal peace may be inalienably his, that the divinity in him repudiates in its fulness every form of want, activity and disappointment. So he strives to leave aside the thoughts, activities and interests that obscure its nature and thus lead him to identify himself with accidental complications. You may have your doubts about the feasibility of his method of deliverance. But the fact remains that he seeks the purity of the inner tone and not complete extinction as a cure for the evils of life.

Candour, therefore, requires the statement that Yoga does not bear the brand of objectionable pessimism on it and that it is so often characterised as pessimistic only because it tolerates no compromise between the life of the spirit and the many coloured and mutable existence with which we are familiar and some temper of which we would mix with our highest conception of the spirit. With no better reason is it described as a form of quietism which saps the energy required for a manly fight. It does recognise the place and value of conflicts in life. But the conflicts that it regards as significant and even momentous are conflicts within the mind and not with adventitious circumstances, and the victories for which it would draw on the heroic resources of the soul are more assured triumphs than achievements however great in the world outside. It gives us, in fact, a comprehensive rule of conduct as well as a speculative system, being an exposition not only of fundamental ideas but also of the way in which they may be made dynamic in life. You may refuse to accept its ideal or reject the method of realisation that it enjoins. But you have not the slightest excuse for labelling its message as a counsel of despair.

### 5. *Yoga and mysticism*

Yoga is popularly held to be training in mystical insight or face-to-face communion with reality, and the peculiar excellence of this discipline is sought to be established by considerations like the following. We take the wrong road when we set forth on our quest for reality along the pathway of ordinary experience

as that only leads us to the porch of truth, to appearances of things and not to things themselves. To grasp the latter, we have, therefore, to follow the yogic prescriptions which are calculated to induce an ecstatic, superconscious state. For only in a state like this is there immediate contact with reality which is separated from appearances by an abyss that no bridge of thought can span. But this is not all, for there are appearances which are beyond the reach of reason and the senses, *viz.*, the future and the distant and the depths of thought and feeling in other minds, while they are lit up instantaneously by yogic flashes of intuition. So the yogi may acquire a full and reliable acquaintance with sensible and supersensible things even though the senses may be in abeyance and the discursive intellect asleep in him.

Such is the metaphysical background on which the practical rules of Yoga are supposed to rest. And the nature of the perfection attainable by their practice is illustrated with reference to the excellence of the Divine intelligence which does not require to march through judgment and proposition to indubitable truths. But this view deprives reason of its prerogative by declaring that they entertain a vain ambition who hope to understand reality by its exercise. It robs Yoga also of its pretensions to rank as a philosophical system, because philosophy must be in one piece or, to put the objection more clearly, it must interpret the whole of experience by bringing to clear consciousness there relations on which it rests. A medley of reason and occultism, however acceptable it may be to devotional temperaments of a certain type, is certainly not amenable to the tests that are applied by critics of philosophy.

But it has been urged that mysticism and philosophy are not incompatible, as a man being a mystic may claim to focus the reality from a higher plane than reason and may then proceed to justify the claim by reasoning which is philosophical in character. If, however, the claim is defensible in this fashion, it ceases to be mystical or incomprehensible. The terms "mystical" and "mysticism" are properly applied to opinions which are too vague and sentimental to admit of being sifted by reference to facts or by the canons of logic, and philosophy naturally fights shy of them. That they are equally repugnant to the principles

of Yoga and to its cardinal tenet, it will be the object of the rest of this book to show in detail, though some attempt will be made here to clear it in a general way of this unjust suspicion.

The genuine brand of mysticism is known by certain striking marks which may be stated at once. The mystic feels as if he is dominated by a superior power which overrides his reason and dictates principles which must be accepted without question. They appear in him, therefore, as illuminations or revelations and are generally surcharged with feeling. And in their celestial light the solid world seems to melt away or to take on a character which establishes new connections with life. Of the genesis and course of these mystic trances he has generally no clear recollection, and though some memory of their content remains, yet its nature defies adequate expression in words, and the transport in which it is enshrined is incommunicable. It claims, in fact, to be simple, self-acting insight into depths of truth that cannot be plumbed by the discursive intellect. And it breaks into life with an abruptness and vigour that isolate it from the context of ordinary experience, which appears in consequence to lose all value and seriousness. Finally, though it is often rich in sensuous imagery, yet the details are such as "refuse to run the gauntlet of confrontation with what comes from the outer world of sense".

Yoga holds on the other hand that our well-being depends on the proper use of our reason and so lays down rules for freeing it from the obscurations of our lower nature. In its cold, clear light are things to be examined and accepted or cast away according as they appear conducive or detrimental to our highest interest. For we have no other guide. It is the understanding that points the way to piety, insight, greatness and a just disregard for things of no moment, and when perverted from the right course leads us into error, iniquity, weakness and a degrading passion for trifles.\* The deflecting influence is always some shade of feeling, some liking or dislike which warps judgment or leads the evidence one way. So the yogī strives to eliminate the emo-

\* The Sanskrit names are *dharma jñāna*, *aiśvarya*, *vairāgya*, *adharma ajñāna anaiśvarya* and *avairāgya*. See *Yoga-Bhāṣya*; 1. 2. and also *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā*, 63, where they are referred to as exhausting experience and arising entirely in the course of Nature.

tions from his scheme of life in order that he may attain steadiness and clarity of vision. And if he succeeds, his mind becomes capable of reflecting with fidelity and completeness whatever may be presented to it. Things thus acquire a new expressiveness, but it is due to the fulness of their apprehension and not to any mystical insight into what is supposed to lie beyond the screen of appearances.

Things are, in fact, clusters of sensible qualities, and inasmuch as they have a history, such attributes as they had in the past and are likely to have in future must be added to those that they possess at present to complete their connotation. It is the nature of phenomena that they come in groups, but the mere fact of their coherence is not a conclusive proof of their inherence in entities that must for ever remain inaccessible to sense.\* At the same time since there can be no addition to or subtraction from the sum total of existence it follows that the so-called past and future appearances co-exist in some form with what is being perceived, and that together they form the thing in its entirety, though our imperfect powers of apprehension have to

\* Swāmi Hariharānanda marks off this view from that of the Buddhists in the following way. The latter hold that a thing is a series of momentary appearances related to one another only in the way of sequence, and that where it seems to remain much the same from moment to moment, there is in reality a succession of similar but transient appearances, so that the sense of continuity is an illusion. But if succession is the only bond between them, there is no explanation of the recurrence of similar acts. So the truth is that some of them are more persistent than others and are, therefore, regarded as constituting its core, while the rest that suffer more frequent mutation are thought and spoken of as its attributes. When a copper pitcher is hammered into a copper plate, the copper endures while the form and size change. But even the copper may become something else owing to the corrosive action of certain things in the atmosphere. Still it will never be lost, but will be converted into another substance or more or less stable appearance. In fact, complete destruction of anything is inconceivable, according to the yogī. And his explanation differs, therefore, from phenomenalism on the one hand and on the other from that extreme realism which posits an incognisable thing-in-itself behind the veil of appearances. Our knowledge of a thing may remain always incomplete, as new features or forms appear with the lapse of time and under the pressure of changing circumstances. But all of them must be conceived as perceptible under some condition or other. —*Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*, III, 14. See in this connection the elaborate discussion in *Yoga-Bhāṣya*, III. 13.

be content with only one of its aspects. But could we perfect them, it would flash before our minds not merely as a theatre of endless records and possibilities but as an actuality made up once for all of what it has been, is and will be. For such a vision then we have not to cross in a magical raft an unfathomable chasm over which thought can fling no bridge. A deeper and more luminous thinking than what we are familiar with is all that is required. But we cannot be equal to it unless we have by strenuous and sustained exercise perfected our senses and made our mental sinews lissome and firm and thus capable of resisting any amount of strain that may be put on them by distractions.

Such is the yogī's estimate of our natural endowments and possibilities, and it differs widely from the mystic's profound distrust of them and his absolute reliance on messages received from a superior power. They agree, indeed, in holding misery to be the essence of phenomenal existence. But while this indictment springs from a constitutional distaste for temporal concerns in the mystic, with the yogī it is a reasoned conviction fortified and rendered effective by a long course of self-denial, which has been divided into five stages.\* There is also a superficial resemblance in the circumstance that both of them believe in the possibility of transcending the ordinary limits of human intelligence and ability. But transcendent knowledge is, according to the mystic, obtained in moments of ecstasy for which the generally recognised qualification is the artless purity of the child, whereas the yogī finds it inconceivable that mere simplicity of nature may be a passport to truths hid from the wise and experienced and so lays down rules of self-culture that appear on close examination to be eminently fitted for improving

\* Indifference, says Vijñāna-Bhikṣu, is not merely the absence of desire, but the feeling expressed in the sentence, — I have seen enough of the good things of the world (*alambuddhi*). And following the distinction drawn in *Yoga-Bhāṣya*, I. 15 and 16, he points out that it arises out of intelligent observation of the difficulty in acquiring and guarding them, of their deterioration in spite of every care and of the evil feelings which are generated in their pursuit. So it is a settled conviction of their vanity and not a constitutional distaste for them which may, indeed, be overcome; and it is perfected only when the highest result of experience comes in the form of a clear realisation of their absolute irrelevance for the true self.—*Yogasāra-Saṃgraha*, pt. 2.

our powers of observation and thought. Hence there is no scientific warrant for characterising his doctrine as a form of occultism.

Education, it is generally held, cannot override the limits of natural capacity which, however elastic they may be, are nonetheless real. And nothing is more striking or more discouraging in a way than the wide and almost immeasurable difference between the quick and unerring discovery of principles by genius and the slow and hesitating advance towards them of mediocrity, which has to depend in the main on the guidance of superior minds. In fact, it is difficult to conceive where the human race might have been in the domains of theory, practice and faith without the search-lights furnished by them. Ripe apples have been falling to the ground since Adam and Eve were accommodated in the garden of Eden; but it required a Newton to find in the commonplace fact a clue to the nature of the most important phenomena in our universe. The same is the case in other departments of experience, for men lived in dense spiritual darkness till the poet and the religious teacher brought down "the light that never was on sea or land" to light them on the way. Now Yoga makes all possible allowance for this difference among men in natural powers. But it claims at the same time that perfection in the culture recommended by it may enable ordinary mortals to rise to heights which have never been scaled by means of natural endowments alone. The energy and diligence required for this perfection are, it is true, rarer even than genius. But the lesson is there that our progress in knowledge and power is in exact correspondence with our ability to concentrate our minds on worthy objects and to rule out whatever in the way of impulses, appetites and passions may stand in the way of such application. And it is a lesson which the sceptic may lay to heart without qualms of conscience. What prevents the acceptance of the yogic system of training is the erroneous idea that it is based on the theory that the fullest knowledge of things is obtained merely by the negative process of inhibiting all sorts of activities, when they come to be reflected faithfully and completely in the glassy essence of the mind. •

Yoga does not dispense with the need of accurate observation and exact analysis or inference. But it stresses rightly enough



the subsequent and final step of withdrawing attention from all that is accidental or adventitious, so as to concentrate it on what is material or valuable in the results obtained by the preliminary processes.\* It is thus, indeed, that the greatest advances have been made in the various departments of knowledge. Observation and inference are adequate for the ordinary purposes of life; but where a fuller knowledge is required, the mind must be allowed to regain its composure after these antecedent activities, so that the truths sought and so far imperfectly seized may shine on it with all the freshness and directness of intuition. We have already referred to the semi-instinctive grasp of great truths by superior minds to which more than to anything else we are indebted for our marvellous and many-sided progress. That grasp was due in almost every case to the faculty of being possessed more or less completely by relevant facts or ideas.

It is loose thinking about the nature of intuition which is responsible for the view that the yogī aspires to direct and immediate knowledge of the subtle, the distant and the future by the exercise of mystical faculties. His intuition is in every case the fruit of a difficult process which starts with some carefully sifted and tested facts of the inner or outer world, though it attains its completeness, vividness and reliability from meditation so intense as to result in self-forgetfulness so that the whole cast of thought comes to be coloured by its object.† In

\* Vijñāna-Bhikṣu observes in *Yoga-Vārtika* I. 41, and in the second part of *Yogasārasaṅgraha* that the mind is fully capable of comprehending the most difficult things, but that it is generally unable to comprehend them owing to the intrusion of irrelevant matters, so that when these are completely shut out the truths sought flash on the mind with the vividness and accuracy of perception. But he seems to minimise the importance of reasoning (*vitarka*) and reflection (*vicāra*) which play a conspicuous part in the apprehension of the highest truths. See *Sūtras* I. 42-45.

† *Sūtra* I. 41 says that the mind which has been perfected by yogic discipline is like superior crystal when in this state, since owing to the absence of every form of distraction it reflects the object to be comprehended so faithfully as to be exactly like it. Apprehension of this type is called *samāpatti* to distinguish it from the fullest knowledge obtainable by ordinary minds. But even of *samāpattis* there are forms like *śavitarka* and *śavicāra* which involve observation, definition and reasoning, and they are regarded as preliminary to the higher forms of *nirvitarka* and *nirvicāra* in which all thinking by means of words is eliminated.

such meditation all its features, all its implications stand out in clear relief, while nothing else is allowed to obtrude. And to such meditation are due in the last resort the greatest achievements in the provinces of faith, science, art and practice. They appeared like revelations, instantaneous, unprovided for and even independent of the will of the thinker only because concentration of the kind referred to could leave no footmarks behind. But they were without doubt the last rewards of psychoses which were remarkable alike for complexity and system and so could be possible only in minds exquisitely finished by nature or training for a thorough co-operation among their several powers. And could the psychologist follow all these interrelated activities of selection, inhibition and contemplation, he would perceive not simple, isolated and apparently causeless results, but a just correspondence between processes and products.

There is, no doubt, an obvious lack of correspondence between certain forms of meditation suggested by Yoga and the results which they are said to be capable of attaining. If, however, we bear in mind that science was in its infancy when this system was developed and that the yogī never set much store by these results but regarded them as so many possible obstacles to spiritual progress, we would not let the weakness of the illustrations affect our judgment on the soundness of his main contention. Nor ought we to quarrel with him when he claims that all sorts of knowledge are possible to the man who has by uniform purity of thought and conduct maintained the original freshness and vigour of his natural powers and whose perfect will has always sought the worthiest objects in utter disregard of the solicitations of the passions and appetites. A will-force so enduring, uniform and potent has, indeed, an awe-inspiring majesty and grandeur that forbids dogmatism on what is beyond its reach.

There is at any rate no excuse for the view that absolute immobility of mind is, according to Yoga, the only thing that is required for a philosophical insight into the nature and conditions of experience. The scope and object of this system and the age in which it was elaborated prevented, of course, a fruitful discussion of the fundamental principles of empirical logic

and of the limits of their applicability. But far from proscribing observation and denouncing speculative thought, it asks its votary to rely on close reasoning for the discovery of those truths which are to be imaged at last in a receptive and unruffled mind. Hence it does not bid commonsense and science a perpetual farewell for a flight into the realms of mysticism. Nor does it derive from the latter its conception of deliverance from the trammels of finitude and temporality.

The mystic seeks refuge from them in a "rapt and helpless adoration" of the Deity, the "transcendent other", for union with whom he would surrender his independence and individuality. Thus he longs only for "that night wherein he may live invisible and dim", though how he may live after this desperate course of self-alienation is not clear. The yogi is jealous, on the other hand, of the rights of his true self and longs only to shed the encumbrances which cause a needless and accidental series of illusions and disappointments termed phenomenal life. They can not, of course, diminish its glory or change its nature as they owe their existence to its abiding and sustaining presence. But they are undesirably obtrusive and so must be remorselessly swept out of the way.

They constitute the not-self or to adopt the more significant yogic expression, the world of knowable objects, among which are included even mental facts because their character, duration and sequence are capable of being noted like those of external phenomena. You can watch your feelings, trace the genesis and growth of your ideas and analyse your volitions just as you do any series of events in the outer world. Only they are nearer to you, more exclusively yours, than are sounds and shapes which lend themselves to observation by others as well. But this relative proximity cannot justify the identification of your thoughts and emotions with your true self, for you always feel that you own them and are not they. And even as possessions, they are not intimately bound up with your existence, since they change continually and their mutations keep pace with those in the world beyond them. But if they are severally external and accidental, you may certainly divest yourself of them without compromising your reality, for to accept the contrary view is to

assume that you are dependent for your existence on them while it is truer to say that they owe their existence to you.

Your finite experience touches, indeed, on your true self and seems even to coalesce with it." Of its unchanging splendour, however, are all your thoughts and emotions but stray reflections or passing gleams. And you cannot know it in the ordinary way or find it anywhere within the ambit of your consciousness, for the knower is *ipso facto* different from the known or the knowable. And yet your genuine well-being lies in reducing yourself to it, as is proved by your dissatisfaction with all that you have experienced or are likely to experience. Such is the creed of the yogi. You may not accept it if you want a more definite assurance about the nature of the existence that will be consequent on emancipation. But you have no excuse for characterising it as mystical. For its essence lies in the perfectly intelligible doctrine that spirituality can never confront us as something external and that we must, therefore, probe deeper for it than our perceptions, thoughts, and feelings which, however close they may be to us, are not ourselves.

## 6 *Yoga and morality*

It may be plausibly urged, however, that spiritual life is an empty, though sounding phrase without those thoughts that "wander through eternity" and those feelings which, like love and reverence, pass beyond the narrow limits of self to establish relations with kindred natures. Or the issue may be more clearly defined by the observation that without objects to comprehend and react upon, personality must cease to be possible while the passage from the personal to the impersonal is not beatific advancement but descent to a lower grade of existence. And even the static perfection aimed at in Yoga may be found fault with on the ground that a future which will prove an absolute monotony, which will bring no new lessons and offer no new opportunities for testing the strength of the soul cannot be welcome to rational beings. Pointed expression is given to a view like this by Davies who remarks that the emancipated soul has in this system "no moral elevation" and "no purpose beyond-

\* See *Tattvavaiśārādī*, I. 4.

itself" and considers it a shortcoming that "no breath of emotion ever breaks in on its placid and self-contained life."\*

But whatever may be said in praise of the conditions of moral excellence, finality cannot be claimed for them, because their essence lies in a categorical demand for their improvement. They are never what they ought to be, and so under them we live in the sheer march of events getting on with their help towards perfection without ever attaining it. But it is this perfection that the yogī strives for, and he is justified in holding that ethical conduct can be no feature of it, as such conduct involves effort and implies the presence of discord, for neither of which there can be room where there is actual and enduring completeness. Discord and tussle belong properly to ordinary human affairs and institutions, and the whole energy of our spiritual nature is bent on transcending them and thus rising to a plane where the conceptions of moral worth and worthlessness have no applicability. But wedded as our thoughts are to our material and social conditions, we are prone to fancy that these must reappear in some etherealised form as a setting for even liberated selves.

Moreover, it is not correct to say that ethical ideas have no place in the metaphysics of the yogī, the truth being that his ethical study is conducted in full view of the wider implications of human existence, with reference to which morality appears to be but a means of escape from the meshes of our lower nature. Constituted as we are at present, there is certainly ample scope for aspiration and effort. But these cannot be ends in themselves, nor can a satisfying stability be claimed for a form of existence which recognises a purpose beyond its limits. The value of morality in the economy of life lies then in the circumstance that it weeds out those passions and appetites which obscure our vision

\* J. Davies, *Hindu Philosophy, The Sāṅkhya-Kārikā of Īśvara-Krishna*, p. 112. Much in the same strain is the following stricture quoted by Professor Radhakrishnan from the *Journal of Philosophy* (Vol. XVI, p. 200). "An ethical purpose and practice", so runs the passage, "is not logically demanded by the goal of Yoga; for honesty, friendliness, etc., are irrelevant to one who seeks utter detachment and isolation. The coupling of a concern for moral values with a desire for the suppression of personality is one of the incongruities that betray the confusion of thought from which the system suffers".

or sap the energy required for rising above the need of continual adjustment to changing conditions, though even where it fails to achieve this all-important object, it may pave the way for relatively higher forms of existence by checking those evil propensities that spell weakness and suffering at every stage.

Yoga recognises a celestial eminence to which access may be won by purity of thought and deed. It believes also that the highest places in that category are open to those whose careers here are lit up by the noblest idea and motives. And it does not postulate Divine intervention to account for what it regards as a simple correspondence between cause and effect. But it holds at the same time that even the most exalted stations cannot completely satisfy the craving of the spirit for freedom and peace. And it is not prepared to show the customary deference to platitudes about the grandeur of personality and its "immaterial, inextinguishable essence."

But this view has been sternly deprecated as subversive of genuine morality and piety, and some of its critics seem to have assumed that intemperate language might be a good substitute for fact and argument in their attacks on it. A capital instance of vulgar acrimony of this type is to be found in Vaughan's comparative estimate of the merits of the western saint and the Hindu yogī, which runs as follows. "This *sainte indifference* of the west essayed to rise above self, to welcome happiness or misery alike as the will of Supreme Love. The odious indifference of these orientals inculcates the supremacy of selfishness as the wisdom of a god. A steep toil, that apathy towards ourselves; a *facilis descensus*, this apathy towards others. One Quietest will scarcely hold out his hand to receive heaven: another will not raise a finger to succour his fellow".\* Comment on this precious piece of effrontery is needless, and one only wishes that the writer had been a little more capable of that "contemplative sloth" which he condemns and a little less inclined to rail at things which he did not understand. He would then have been better fitted for the duties of life which he applauds and among which is certainly included the obligation to study men and things before presuming to sit in judgment over them.

\* R.A. Vaughan, *Hours with the Mystics* vol. I, p. 42

One turns with a sense of relief from Pharisaic corn of this sort to Mckenzie's observations, which show a sympathetic insight into the nature of the task that the yogī sets before himself. But here too Christian conceptions are brought in to test the soundness of maxims suggested by an interpretation of life which is different from that of the Christian, and certain statements are made which are really pointless though they sound like serious animadversions. "There is no place", says he, "for social ideals in the goal of attainment which the Yoga offers. The discipline which is inculcated has reference only to the liberation of the individual who practises it. When others do come in at all, they are not considered as members of a society of persons whose well-being is intimately bound up with mine, but as beings the injury of whom interferes with my own progress towards liberation. The social duties that are prescribed are, therefore, of a purely negative kind. . . In modern times it is the miraculous powers that are believed possible of attainment through yogic practices that have been specially sought, and it has been less practised as a means to the attainment of final deliverance. . . . At its best the Yoga has little or no place for 'the life of the good citizen and the honest neighbour, and at its worst it opens the way for all kinds of immoral frauds. . . . Jesus condemns pride and covetousness and lust with all the earnestness of any Hindu teacher, but the motive is different. In Hindu teaching these are generally thought of as strengthening that conviction of individuality in cherishing which the soul is drawn away from its true being. In the teaching of Jesus they are thought of as impeding the development of a true individuality through which the highest ends of the universe may be realised.'"\*

Yoga claims, indeed, that the ordinary limits of human intelligence and ability are transcended by those who have completely subdued their passions and appetites and acquired the art of applying the measureless resources of their minds to the objects that they consider to be desirable. But complete deliverance from the trammels of finitude is the one object that has, according to it, a universal and enduring importance, and so it cautions us against the fascinations of power and glory. The gods

\* J. Mckenzie, *Hindu Ethics*, pp. 154, 251 and 253.

themselves tempt the unwary devotee by offering him a position similar to theirs; but the plaudit of the world and the homage of the weak and ignorant are a poor consolation to him who forfeits his chances of attaining unqualified freedom for their sake.\* It is very true that extraordinary powers are oftener sought in this degenerate age than spiritual well-being in spite of this clear note of warning. But a just measure of the greatness of a creed is furnished by those only who take its established way with the single purpose of arriving at its goal. And as Mckenzie applies the opposite principle in testing the ethical value of Yoga, he may be asked by way of a reply to mention the faith which is justified by the conduct of the majority of its professors.

He assumes also that the attenuated atmosphere of Yoga is unfavourable to the growth of those qualities which enter in the making of the good citizen and the honest neighbour. But charity, truthfulness, chastity, contentment and a high hearted aversion to self-indulgence of every form are among the virtues that are considered essential for success in the yogic discipline. And we have yet to discover what virtues rarer still are needed for the common business of life. Yoga stresses, indeed the need of frequent meditation on worthy objects and of abstraction from the ordinary affairs of life for the purpose. There is, however, no excuse for assuming that meditation of this type must breed an unpractical temperament, as we sometimes come across men who have by this supreme activity so strengthened and co-ordinated the powers of their mind as to be able to give order and unity to the distracting affairs of the world and to endure its inevitable evils with unfaltering courage.

It may be objected that Yoga advocates complete detachment from secular interests for the sake of uninterrupted meditation. But the recommendation is for those rare spirits who have fully realised the futility of all worldly ambition and love. To ordinary mortals its chief lesson is that power and pelf, illgotten or ill-used, are unmitigated curses while superfluity itself is a

\* This occurs in *sūtra* III. 51, and *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* adds by way of comment that desires and aspirations are like puffs of air which may blow out the lamp of Yoga that is being carefully tended and that any slackness in feeding it due to inattention or selfishness will strengthen at once those illusions and passions that are detrimental to spiritual life.



snare which those who care for spiritual well-being should try to avoid.\* And such also is the teaching of creeds that differ widely from it and from one another. The view is, no doubt, very widely entertained at present that wealth and influence extend considerably our sphere of usefulness and that the acquisitive spirit is, therefore, better on the whole than the charm of temper and demeanour which is sometimes found in inert and sluggish natures. But the currency of this doctrine is due to the circumstance that men seldom take religion radically, being always inclined to temper it with some worldly interests and affections.

Mckenzie is perfectly right when he says that virtue derives its sanction in Yoga from its tendency to weaken that narrow sense of individuality which disguises the real nature of the soul. But he makes much of a verbal distinction in contrasting the yogic conception with the Christian view that virtue assists in the development of a true individuality through which alone the highest ends of the universe will be realised. For the individuality which the Christian seeks to develop is spiritual, while that which the yogī wants to shed is made up of excrescences like errors, passions and appetites, so that the ultimate object of both is the same. And the well-being of the universe is of interest to the Christian mainly because and in so far as it furthers his own well-being. For his religion never inculcates any form of sacrifice without explicit reference to the other side of the account which contains the guarantee of a full recompense in the life to come. In fact, an injunction to give up all for nothing is repugnant to its spirit and incompatible with its theology. Thus the self sins under both the codes not through self-assertion but through self-abandonment or submission to those mental and

\* *Sūtra* II. 1, says that abstention from the ordinary pleasures of life (*tapas*), reverent study of the Scriptures (*svādhyāya*) and surrender of the fruits of activity in favour of the Deity and refusal to follow the lead of personal interest (*Īśvara prañidhāna*) are preparations for Yoga for those who must live and work in the world. *Tapas* is generally translated as asceticism or austerity; but *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* expressly says that it should be such as may be practised without danger or injury to the body, and Swāmi Hariharānanda thinks that all these are forms of self-control, *tapas* being control of the body, while *svādhyāya* is control of speech and *Īśvara-prañidhāna*, control of the mind, See *Bhāsvati*, II. 1.

moral propensities which perpetuate the domination of what is adventitious and accidental. And with such deference as is due to the considered opinion of Vaughan, it must be said that the selfishness of the yogī is quite as compatible as that of the Christian with the largest demands on forbearance and kindness. He desires no less than others the same consummation for all living beings, and the probably succeeds better than they in conquering animosity by persistent good-will. In fact, he is told at the outset of his training that he cannot proceed very far in it unless he has unaffected friendliness for the fortunate, compassion equally unaffected for the miserable, a proper regard for spiritual elevation wherever it may be found and a disposition to forget the trespasses of others even when they happen to injure him.\*

But though the ethical tone of Yoga is pure and high, it is not enthusiastic; and the sphere of duty appears to contract to suit the lukewarmness of its feeling. So Mckenzie hits off a distinguishing feature when he says that virtue under this code is summed up in passive abstinence from wrong-doing, while active beneficence is the corner-stone of Christian morality. It would be unphilosophical, however, to take this distinction as a mark of inferiority, since there is a philosophical unity in both the systems, which furnishes the key to what is peculiar or prominent in each. And an unphilosophical rejoinder to it would be that Christianity seems to merge all virtues in beneficence and thus to ignore the claims of truthfulness, chastity and contentment when it says that the one test of merit would be whether the naked had been clothed and the hungry fed. The truth is that though greed and lust and luxury are condemned in no uncertain voice, yet there is a special emphasis and warmth in its condemnation of hard-heartedness and parsimony. In other words, virtue is principally an activity with the Christian who stresses the social relations of man, while it consists mainly in freedom

\* These are called *parikarma* or means of purifying the mind. Vācaspati Miśra brings out their importance when he says that though distractions may be ruled out by the exercises subsequently mentioned, yet the resulting composure can never be stable unless these are properly cultivated.—*Tattvavaiśāradi*, I. 33.

from degrading habits and associations for the yogī, who values the independence of the spirit above everything else.

### *7. Types of ethical theory*

So there is an important difference between his ethical outlook and that of the Christian, which is correctly referred to by Mckenzie in the observation that "there is no place for social ideals in his goal". And this difference is due to the circumstance that the warrant of conduct is not the same in both. It may not be immediately obvious how far, in spite of much apparent similarity in the valuation of duties, codes may differ about the source from which they derive their binding character. But the question is of some practical importance, as the nature of the authority determines in some measure the scope and meaning of the obligations, thus introducing subtle shades of difference in duties which go by the same name in different codes. The point is illustrated below by a brief review of certain types of ethical theory.

There are men who believe that actions owe their moral colouring to the will of the Deity who has signalled his approval of certain courses of conduct by deciding to reward them and to visit contrary courses with condign punishment. That decision has been communicated to them by inspired teachers, and they find a monitor too in the secret recesses of their hearts. Hope and fear and probably fear more than hope impel them to be good, and the goodness sought is correctness of behaviour rather than purity of motive. It is moreover not obligatory or essential in the strictest sense, as the penalty for neglect may be avoided by expiatory acts or vicarious suffering. This is the externalisation of morality with a vengeance, as men conform under it to moral laws only because they have been laid down by One who has the power to reward and to punish. Yet crude as this conception is, it is the creed of the thoughtless and ignorant even where they pay a lip-homage to higher forms of faith.

Others hold that the ideas of good and evil are fundamental as no mental chemistry or external pressure can evolve them out of our sense of expediency and of its opposite. They believe also that certain forms of activity and the motives thereto are inhe-

rently right while others are not, and that the distinction between these is and must be recognised by all rational beings, by the Creator as well as the created. The Creator, however, feels no conflicts as His thoughts and actions are always in perfect accord with His conviction of what is right. And He guides the conflict in other minds, but without prejudice to their freedom, by rewarding every victory over rebellious impulses and punishing every defeat. Duty thus acquires a double force, the fear of punishment being reinforced by the knowledge that every sin is an offence against human nature, a movement towards a lower level. Scruples and reflections form the staple of the moral life under this code, which denies all remedial value to mere acts of atonement while allowing a chastening and renovating power to contrition. But its superior refinement is not incompatible with narrowness and intolerance as it does not generally take into account the influence of circumstances on character and the progressive nature of the moral sense owing to which lines of activity that are regarded as natural and right by some are but struggling ideals with others.

Christianity adds to this conception of morality the idea of the solidarity of mankind in the business of life here and hereafter. God watches over the spiritual interest of the entire race as every member of it is dear to Him. The tie of brotherhood among individuals is thus rendered inviolate and even death is held to respect it, as reunion with those who have been loved and lost on earth and communion with saints are among the blessings that good Christians expect to enjoy in heaven. So they yearn and strive for a social order that will bear some affinity to the anticipated arrangement in the kingdom above. At the same time there is a certain brightness and restfulness of spirit in them which is due to the conviction that even when life continues to be petty and miserable in spite of their best efforts, they are rehearsing in it, in immature style, no doubt, and on a narrow stage, a vaster destiny the glory of which can be only dimly conceived at present. So purity of motive is still the supreme test of conduct; but there is a well-marked tendency to judge it with reference to its effect on human happiness. In fact, constant, self-sacrificing labour for promoting it is firmly believed to earn in another world the supreme felicity of a closer

communion with Him who, as the embodiment of righteousness, guides such labour in all stages. Thus duty, which is more or less irksome, is transformed into devotion, and reverence and gratitude come to the support of hope. But this code has not much to say about the obligations of man to inferior animals, and it is related to a conception of paradise which, if taken literally, gives the idea that the limitations of our earthly life will not be completely transcended in celestial existence. For this conception is so rich in sensuous elements, so full of details of material and social well-being as to imply that the disembodied spirit must cling to them even after its release from the trammels of the flesh.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* stresses in much the same way the spiritual value of selfless activity, holding it to be more enlightening than meditation and devotion for certain natures and in certain circumstances. But this activity must be such as they are called to by the situation in which they are placed. For the situation should declare with ringing clearness what is right for them, and they are weak or selfish if they pause or turn back only because they cannot advance without trampling under foot emotions and impulses which they have learnt to cherish. So if the occasion requires, they must steel their hearts against the specious appeals of a partial affection or pity and shut their eyes to the collateral results of their action in order to be strong and single-minded in the performance of their duty. For subtle shades of selfishness often lurk in their preference for certain kinds of work and in their far-reaching schemes for the good of others ; and in turning away from the plain road of duty to attend to these, they seem to forget that the consequences, proximate and remote of their activity are in other and better hands than theirs. God is, indeed, never far from them even in this sublunar world. He has not contrived it from outside and set it going like a piece of machinery, which they must mend when it goes wrong. And they have a poor idea of His omnipresence and might if they conceive Him as other than an intelligent life-force which appears in its innumerable forms and mutations. These do not exhaust Him, however, as He shines forth again in every rational being as the reason of his reason and the heart of his heart, but in such a way as not to extinguish his personality. Thus subor-

dinate creatures are like islands of individual will in a boundless ocean of Divine agency, their separate activities being movements within a circle of necessity. But since they are so circumstanced, their lives may pass out of anxiety and trouble into a quiet, abiding joy if they follow the light vouchsafed them in the inmost recesses of their being instead of vainly striving to modify the order of events to suit their personal likings of interests.

That light, however, does not always burn clear because it is obscured by self love or quenched by distrust in Providence. There are men who seek in inaction a remedy for the evils of life though, constituted as they are, they must be incessantly active. There are others who neglect the duty that lies nearest to them in the vain and impious hope of doing something more useful or important. But perfection cannot be claimed for any form of work, its excellence lying really in the spirit in which it is done. And what that spirit should be has been explained by sages and illustrated in noble lives. Janaka and men like him won salvation by suppressing all selfish impulses and working ceaselessly for the sake of their fellow creatures in the manner indicated by their respective stations. Even those who have attained beatitude are still similarly employed, as the inclination to help others is natural and spontaneous in them. In fact, living beings form a compact corporation, every member of which is dependent on the rest for his existence and well-being. And so he is a thief who fails to pay for life and growth by the kind of service that is expected of him. The Lord Himself never rests from His cosmic activity, though He cannot by activity add to His perfection. So the human nature approximates to the Divine when life is interpreted as service and freedom is sought by pulling down the thick-set barricades of selfishness. They receive His grace who make this attempt for owing to the elimination of personal likings and dislikes, there comes to them the blessedness of peace in the midst of noise and bustle, which is His blessedness. Hence salvation may be won even here and now, as it is no more than the enduring sense of a most intimate union with God.

The *Gītā* values activity, therefore, as a means of reconciling the erratic human will to the Divine. There is, no doubt, the

idea of corporate existence and of the interdependence of individual interests. But it is not suggested that the individual should realise his destiny by moving with forethought towards a far-off goal of external perfection. He finds himself in a Divine order which he may not modify or improve. He must, therefore, take his circumstances as they are; and within their narrow limits so regulate his life that 'self might be annulled'. And he is a responsible agent only in so far as he may work intelligently towards such a consummation or perversely set himself up against the meaning of the cosmos by quarrelling with his place in society and spurning the duties that pertain thereto.

These ethical theories are closely connected with certain theological conceptions, such as the doctrine of personal immortality and of the moral government of the world by a Being whose thought and activity are in complete harmony with an ideal of excellence which remains to be realised in inferior creatures. But there have been thinkers in every age who have repudiated this alliance as unwarranted and even positively mischievous. The ethical value of motive and conduct is, in their opinion, largely a matter of social tradition based on experience which has answered in the history of the race. But necessary modifications have often been prevented by the conservative influence of religion, which has given a parochial character to ethical systems or, worse still, perpetuated as inviolable rules what were only the prejudices of a time and a place. So what is required for the onward march of the race is a candid and whole-hearted recognition of the rule of expediency or rejection of every other warrant of conduct. Yet individuals can never be at liberty to act in ways that are detrimental to the interests of others, because the spirit of co-operation helps them materially in the struggle for existence, and co-operation involves some sacrifice. Hence there arises the conflict between principles and desires; and in the triumph of the former is to be found the essence of morality. It is then far-sighted pursuit of what is advantageous and not compliance with any principle which, unlike enlightened selfishness, is too abstract to fit the perplexing sinuosity of actual life.

The consequences of actions are under this code more important than the motives in which they originate, and its champions

find fault with religion for emphasizing the latter and thus breeding over-sensitive natures which are held back by small scruples from courses that may be useful on the whole. This paralysis of the will is a moral infirmity, and it is better, according to them, to contract many a dirtmark in the rough affairs of the world than to remain spotless by maintaining a jealous aloofness. And they hope that as the influence of religion declines, men will grow "less introspective and more objective" or, to put it plainly, the useful employment of their resources and opportunities and not the fastidious multiplication of cases of conscience will come to be regarded as the main business of life. Action and its consequences will then appear better fitted than faith or sentiment for elucidating their difficulties and illuminating the path on which they should go. So the theological fiction of a personal immortality will be rejected as no longer required for heartening them in the constant practice of virtue. And when practice will perfect it, there will be a general readiness for sustained and collective activity for the good not indeed of perishing individuals, but of the race that will endure.

Yogic ethics is quite as explicit in denying permanence to the tiny individual points which exist by relating themselves to other things and grow by multiplying such relations. But it holds that each such point or personality is the obscure reflection of an eternal and immutable principle on what is never the same for two successive moments. That principle is the Divinity in man, and to isolate it from the cumbrous appendage of empirical life is, therefore, his prime interest and duty. But he cannot thus sift the essence from the oppressive weight of accidents so long as he is dominated by the sense of personal existence, for it is the nucleus of his varied experience, of the evil as well as the so-called good. Hence those virtues have to be sedulously cultivated which may check and ultimately extinguish this active, aggressive self-consciousness (*ahamkāra*) which builds up a changeful, equivocal existence by drawing on alien sources for materials. There need, indeed, be no hesitation and no regret in deciding to surrender this half-life, which is so made up of events as to be like a voyage in uncertain weather and on an unknown sea. Moreover, there is light enough even on this rough sea to



enable us to catch glimpses of a blissful haven.\* For it is impossible to set down as unreal the permanence and immutability which you claim as your birthright even in this life of pretence. All your thoughts and hopes centre round them in the last resort. Call them by what name you will, rest or freedom or fulness of life, towards them you strive in all your activities since you feel vicissitudes to be unsatisfying. And you cannot avoid vicissitudes so long as your narrow, got-up-self is busy in setting up petty objects of interest which can never effectually still your longings. But you can get out of this vicious circle if you accept disinterestedness as the guiding principle of your life. Selfishness or the state of being a self, a thing among things which aggrandises itself by establishing connections with more and more of these has to be got rid of.† And so you have to pin your trust to the contrary principle of disinterestedness. If you succeed in doing this, you will realise at last that no movement is required, no progress towards a distant goal. You have only to be yourself or, in other words, to simplify your nature by casting what is accidental or adventitious in order to attain perfection.

It is a gross misrepresentation then of the yogi's attitude to say that he is apathetic to the fate of others because he is intensely selfish. What he regards with indifference is the succession of joys and sorrows that make up phenomenal life in others as in himself. These evanescent facts are the inevitable consequences of what they have done in the past, in this or in some previous existence. And what they are sowing now they will have to reap

\* The yogi's ideal may be fitly expressed in the following words of William James,—The way of escape from evil on this system is not by getting it preserved in the whole as an element essential but 'overcome'. It is by dropping it out altogether, throwing it overboard and getting beyond it, helping to make a universe that shall forget its very name and place. —*Pragmatism* p. 297.

† Swāmi Hariharānanda says that the mind is so constituted as to be incurably mutable, so that uninterrupted happiness is not within its possibilities, while ever-lasting peace may be attained if it disappears with that duality which is the mother-soil of experience. See *Bhāṣya*†, II. 15, footnote. Vijñāna-Bhikṣu says in the first part of his *Yogasārasaṅgraha* that *puruṣa* attains isolation when the mind sleeps the sleep that knows no waking (*mahānidrā*), for then the countless shows, the essence of which is pain, finally disappear.

similarly in the future. He cannot protect them from the consequences of their activities, though they may, if they choose, purchase immunity by refusing to harbour self-regarding motives and to recognise as their own the necessarily self-centred experiences that arise out of them. Such is his creed, and there is obviously no room for social ideals in the ordinary sense in it. At the same time he is fully alive to the highest interest of his fellow-creatures and always ready to take them by the hand to a higher altitude whence the goods of sense will appear like a low mist that "veils the brightness which it cannot blot." This he considers to be the soundest or most effective way of helping them, while he discounts other forms of philanthropy because they result in qualified good, in good that is transitory and not infrequently attended by sufferings for those for whom it is not meant.\*

Capital has been made by adverse critics of the injunction to renounce the world. But Yoga recognises stages which may not be over-leapt in the progress towards its goal. And it does not ask those who can cheerfully acquiesce in things as they are to give up tilling the fertile fields and walking in the established ways. They have yet much to learn from their relations with others, and so the cultivation of certain mental and moral habits is prescribed for them as a necessary preparation for the higher reaches of spiritual life. The training is difficult, indeed; but if it is honestly and generally submitted to, many of the evils that social ideals have so far vainly attempted to remove will disappear of themselves. For you will find it difficult to name the remediable evils which may demand your special care, when all men are disposed to be charitable, honest, chaste, truthful, contented and serious. But there are in every age a few individuals for whom the mood of satisfied acquiescence in the mutable and the accidental is impossible. The aspirations and achievements of life ring hollow to them because these cannot solve the riddle of ever-present pain, and they would, therefore, sacrifice all to seek clearness of thought and a satisfying explanation of the mystery. To such rare spirits, the counsel of Yoga is that they should

\* It is but fair to observe in this connection that certain schools of yogis add active kindness (*dayā*) and charity (*dāna*) to the list of virtues that are generally considered to be obligatory.

completely discard those objects which are deemed worthy of attainment by the world and seek in intense and uninterrupted meditation a solution of their problem.\* And if you take exception to the counsel because it appears to ignore active, external obligations, you cannot reasonably acquit the scientist, the philosopher and the religious thinker of culpable neglect of duty when they get under the shelter of a wall and reflect there undisturbed by the storms that beat outside.

### 8. *Yoga and Religion*

Yoga holds also that there are forms of religious experience to each of which belongs a relative validity due to its correspondence with the intellectual outlook and moral elevation of the experients. They have been found in the history of the race and sometimes in a single life, and they are certainly right in their places. But they should lead up to a level of religious apprehension in which the conception of objectivity is transcended and the supreme reality is felt to be a purely immanent absolute. There is no reason for suspecting that such a faith may act as a corrosive scepticism on morals, as the nobility of temper which inspires it is the last reward of perfection in all the virtues inculcated by Yoga. It makes, moreover, no claim on your powers of believing as it does not ask you to accept a mental creation as an external reality. Nor can you discover elements in it that have been surreptitiously introduced by ordinary hopes and fears.

\* Vijñāna-Bhikṣu says that the general instruction to practise steadfastness and detachment in the first chapter of the *Sūtras* is meant only for those who are sufficiently advanced, while the second gives detailed instruction for others about the practice of certain virtues and forms of devotion which are suited to life in the world. Vyāsa too observes that the first chapter sets forth the Yoga for those who have learnt to control their minds while the second shows how Yoga may be possible even for those whose minds are not sufficiently disciplined. But Vijñāna-Bhikṣu goes farther where he enumerates three varieties of Yoga and quotes *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* in support of his statement. The verses may be translated as follows,—Sanaka, Sanandana and others are engaged in the contemplation of the Highest. The Yoga of activity belongs to ordinary gods and inferior creatures, while Hiraṇyagarbha and others like Him combine the Yoga of action with the Yoga of contemplation. But orthodox yogis will not accept this view since activity is, in their opinion, only a passport to the knowledge that saves.

Dr. Urquhart says that "the positive religious motives of union with the Suprême and devotion to Him have not been emphasized in Patañjali's system." He misses here the import of the yogi's faith, though he is right when he observes that Patañjali's *Īśvara* is "a pattern merely and as such, is merely one of the means of attaining salvation."\* In fact, the orthodox yogi could accept this statement in its entirety but for the disparagement implied in the word "merely." But it is not to *Īśvara* that the yogi's homage is ultimately due. What he adores is what he aspires to be, and the object of his devotion is beautifully characterised in the following account of the development of his faith.

Impressed by the immensity and grandeur of the universe, he turns to meditate on its Author and Lord and represents Him as the eight-handed Viṣṇu beaming with unsurpassable intelligence and power, armed with the most effective weapons and decorated with the brightest jewels. But the attributes of might and majesty, the resplendent crown, the awe-inspiring mace and quoit, the far-flashing gems on the breast disappear one after another as his meditation deepens, till he is face to face with a Personage, complete in himself and, therefore, without any decoration or symbol of authority, above joy and sorrow and detached from the world which, however, stands revealed in His light. The vision holds the yogi spellbound; but as he contemplates its superior excellence which owes nothing to decoration and setting, he discovers that it is but a picture of what is real and indestructible in himself. And so he decides to shed all that is contingent or external, all that he has loaded himself with in his mad endeavour to improve what does not stand in need of improvement.†

\* *Pantheism and the Value of Life* p. 372.

† See *Tattvavaiśāradi*, III. 1, 3, 6. Vijnāna-Bhikṣu gives the development in general and rather vague terms in the first part of his *Yogasārasaṃgraha*, where he quotes a verse from *smṛti* which may be translated as follows. "In the early stages of Yoga, God is to be contemplated as having form, and only afterwards should He be meditated on as being bodiless. For the mind is to be led slowly to the contemplation of the subtle after it has been sufficiently practised in contemplating what may be perceived by the senses." Here we have a conception of the Deity as an external reality and so it is not the completion of the yogic discipline. But as already observed, Vijnāna-Bhikṣu's is not the orthodox view in such matters.

## CHAPTER II

### SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND INTELLIGENCE

#### 1. *The knower and the knowable*

The knower and the known, though closely related, are yet felt to be dissimilar owing to the nature of the relation that exists between them. But the extent of the dissimilarity is not realised in ordinary thought which draws a hazy and shifting line between the two, the position being determined by the dominant impulse or interest of the hour. There is, in fact, an inherent tendency to confound them, and from this confusion results every error that stands in the way of our spiritual progress. So it is of the utmost importance that we should class apart from the knower whatever appears to be on the dividing line, but is found on analysis to be an object of knowledge

The world outside us is marked off at once and rightly too as our object though much in it is still unexplored. For we are continually appropriating more and more of this extensive field, and as no limit can be set to the possibilities of this intellectual acquisition, there is a valid warrant for taking prospective as well as present gains into account in determining its character. But even then we do not reach the outskirts of the knowable, for coming nearer home we recognise without much difficulty that the cognitive and active senses (*jñānendriyas* and *karmendriyas*) which figure so largely in this business of appropriation are themselves object of knowledge because we use them as our instruments (*karaṇas*) with more or less exact knowledge of what they are fit for. And when closely examined, we admit also, though perhaps not so readily, that the energy which sustains and renovates the body and maintains the senses in working order, however indispensable it may be to our present existence, cannot be identified with ourselves or classed apart from the knowable.\* We are concerned when it is at fault and we try to

The Sanskrit name for this energy is *prāṇāh*, and it is always used in the plural in view of the five different forms of its manifestation, so that it

discover and remedy the defect. But just because we are so concerned about it and are able to observe its operations specially when it goes wrong, it is an object of knowledge, though it seems to be the very foundation of organic and sensuous life.

## 2. *The mind as Object-knowledge*

May we then identify ourselves with the rich store of experience which grows with advancing years and sets its value on our lives?\*

It is, doubtless, a distinctive possession, being entirely and exclusively our own. Still, as already observed, it is different from ourselves in so far as it is possessed. We make efforts to increase it, avoiding what is likely to be unpleasant and welcoming whatever appears to be congenial or agreeable. And these efforts are attended with varying degrees of success, because what we get depends quite as much on the circumstances in which we are placed as on our own initiative. Moreover, its progress is marked by revival as well as addition; it is a stock, a store, and like other stocks it requires to be renewed and replenished, while we feel that we remain unchanged amidst, and in spite of, this constant change.

The difference is brought out clearly by an examination of simple mental facts. I see a pitcher before me or call to mind an incident belonging to the days that are no more or draw a mental picture of what is in store for me in the days that are yet to come. The percept or the recollection or the forecast interests me for the time being and is related to me as a present possession. It is my percept or my recollection or my forecast, but for the same reason it is not myself.† And the feeling with which it may be associated or the activity to which that feeling may prompt is no more than itself an integral part of my nature. I may be inspired by hope or unnerved by fear, I may

means the forces that are responsible for the preservation and activity of the system, the verbal root involved signifying both movement and respiration.

\* The usual Sanskrit expression is *vijñānapravāha* or stream of worldly experience or sequence of conscious states, attention being thus specially directed to their transitoriness.

† *Sāmkhya-Sūtra*, VI. 3 draws the line clearly when it says that the genitive case-ending is used to mark off the possessor from the thing possessed and not to identify them.

be the victim of sorrow or the possessor of happiness. Still as even such language testifies, I appear to be different from them even while they are being experienced. They are felt or known and so they cannot be the knower.

But if my thoughts and resolutions are to be included among objects of knowledge, much the same logic should prevent me from classing differently the processes, intellectual and conative, of which they are the outcome. For by turning my gaze inwards I am able to analyse them and even to discover the principles by which they are governed. I must, it is true, distinguish them still from the concepts, judgments and decisions which testify to their presence.\* But the distinction does not imply that they cannot be objects of knowledge themselves. When I solve a problem, I do observe more or less the steps by which I arrive at my result, and I hope to be able to retrace them should any occasion arise for checking its accuracy. Similarly when I criticise a practical judgment of mine I pass in review the considerations that led to it in order to determine its value. All mental processes are not, indeed, observed in this fashion; but the same may be said of objects of sight or hearing. Of the many things that cross my field of vision every day, how few do I notice with care and can recall the image of with sufficient distinctness ?

It follows that we must include among the known the faculties that interpret the unconnected and diverse messages from an alien world and supplement the process by what appear to be adequate answers on our behalf. We have thus two sets of superior instruments which co-operate with the senses in supplying us with our experience. And when taken together, in view of the purpose that they serve, they may be regarded as energy of a comprehensive type (*manas*) which co-ordinates for our benefit the impressions received from outside and directs the activity of our organism in response to those impressions. Such a view of our mental outfit seems, indeed, to run counter to the

\* The Sanskrit word, *grahana*, which means literally 'to seize', is used to denote both the act of apprehension and its result. At the same time expressions like *cittakriyā* (mental process) and *cittakārya* (mental product) show that there is no confusion of thought in bringing them together.

popular idea on the subject, which identifies the mind with the man. But uncritical judgment like this stultifies itself even in common parlance. When we speak of a man's faculties and of the need of training them properly for his benefit or of the chances of their rusting in disuse, the implication is that they are his property. But what belongs to him is obviously not himself.

One objection remains. The mind is observed in its manifestation as facts of consciousness and never as it is apart from them or, in other words, mental processes are what we are cognisant of and not the mind in its quiescent state, so that we go beyond attested facts in classing it with objects of knowledge. But the same may be said of every form of energy.\* We notice it in its operations and characterise it with reference to them. And a similar method of classification should lead us to accord to the mind a place, pre-eminent though it be, among objects of experience with which it is so closely connected in its manifold activities and not to designate it as the knower whose interests it appears to subserve

Neither can we identify ourselves as knowers with our personality (*ahamkāra*). It is the outcome of diverse conditions some of which are mental while others are physiological or social. And it changes from time to time in sympathy with the environment without affecting our identity. Pure self-consciousness or the mere conviction of our existence seems, indeed, to have better claims for being regarded as what is essential or inmost in us.† It appears to be persistent, it does not change its character, and all sorts of mental activity of any measure of clearness relate themselves to the ego revealed in it. But even this self-consciousness has a wave-like movement rising up to the point of maximum distinctness and then subsiding till it appears to be lost. So it is more in the form of a series than of an abiding and immutable reality which is our conception of the knower.

\* The words, *virtti* and *vyavasāya*, which are used to express activity in general and mental activity in particular, anticipate and meet the objection referred to here, for *virtti* is that which a person or a thing lives by and *vyavasāya*, that which prevents destruction or maintains in existence.

† Self-consciousness is *asmitā* or better still *asmītmātra* (the mere sense of being a self) while the other term stands often for a more complex conception, being interchangeable with *ahamkāra* or personality.



Besides, the yogī is able to trace not only its intermittent life, but also its inception all along the line in some sort of stimulus however vague and remote.

### 3. *Self-consciousness*

So we have to push our quest of the ultimate knower still further. But it is desirable at this stage to undertake a closer survey of self-consciousness and all that it is responsible for. Ordinarily it is associated with some notion of the body and of the vital energy locked up in it. When I am asked what I consider myself to be, whatever other factors may occur to me by way of an answer, the image of my personal appearance is certainly not very much in the background. The next adventitious element is the thought that I am an active creature, capable of originating movement within and outside the body for my purposes. And closely related to this conception is the knowledge that I am susceptible to impressions from without received through the five special senses. When questioned further on the subject, I think of the mental states that constitute my inner life and of the faculties that find expression in them. I think also of my status and character, which serve to distinguish me from others. These are, however, shifting phases of personality, and circumstances determine which of them should occupy the mind at any particular moment. But it goes without saying that the simpler notion of the self as a more abiding reality underlies all their specific forms.

And as my knowledge of the world outside and my activity in it are intimately related to these mental attitudes, it follows that self-consciousness is co-extensive with every other form of consciousness. My mind is, in fact, ceaselessly active, now about this and then about that, now in a certain manner and in a different way soon after. But the self (*grahītā*) remains a centre of reference throughout these varied and even erratic movements. It links up also mental facts separated from one another by time and the accident of their origin, for when forgotten ideas well up from unknown depths, it gives them their proper setting in the past and relates them at the same time to their new conditions. It seems, therefore, to be an enduring feature, while they are transitory, being like so many waves differently lighted and of

different amplitude on the extensive bosom of an ever-flowing stream. They are shaped and coloured, indeed, by the circumstances in which they appear. But in spite of their heterogeneity, they are mental facts because *I* know them. And this is the most important consideration of all, for it proves that self-consciousness is not only the bond of union among them but also the stuff of which they are made, from whatever extraneous source they may derive the diversity of their form and content.

May I not then say that my variously modulated existence is composed of countless changes rung on it? It does not simply overlap them as a broader fact running alongside of other facts. Nor is it limited to the function of integrating them in the continuity of experience. Its hall-mark is on every type of mental activity and every form of knowledge, for to it they owe their definiteness or certainty of character as mental facts.\* Their minor distinctions are due, no doubt, to formative principles that are at work outside its limits. But these are effective only because self-consciousness responds to their appeal by appropriating images of actuality to itself.

And yet, as already suggested, it cannot be regarded as a complete explanation of our existence as conscious beings. It varies in distinctness from time to time and is found at any particular moment to be passing from insentience to complete knowledge or taking the reverse course, so that it is more in the nature of a tidal movement than of an unchanging reality standing over against a world of perceived mutations.† Besides, though whatever is known comes to be such by being related to it, yet it too seems to stand in need of embodiment or fulfilment under ordinary conditions, the development of experience along various lines being the process by which it is illustrated and enriched. And this process involves the establishment of

\* *Buddhi*, which we shall see is nothing but self-consciousness, is defined as that which completes a mental process or gives definiteness to it. See *Sāmkhya-Sūtra*, II. 13.

† Swāmi Hariharānanda observes that when the yogi is able to shut out all thought of what is outside and to concentrate on self-consciousness, he realises that it is a series of similar states, though as activity is at a minimum in them, the perception of sequence is not so definite or pronounced as in the case of mental facts which are directly induced by sense-impressions. See *Pātanjala-Yoga-Darśana*, I. 36.

connection with objects that are more and more remote but are nevertheless sought as the necessary means of its expression.

#### 4. *The empirical ego*

In its purest form it is certainly not the outcome of the experience-process described above, as objective relations are able to define or particularise the self only because they are incorporated as details in judgments that identify the latter as the knower of this and that. Every such judgment is a unit of self-consciousness complicated by the appropriation of foreign elements. In fact, this self-consciousness makes a continuous judgment of our conscious life or gives it that embracing unity which is more than the togetherness of mental facts. So the self or ego which figures in it, appears to rise above the mere process of experience in becoming aware of objective relations and of its own life in connection with them. But of this self too there is a clear comprehension in the principle of identity which has been referred to as the foundation of mental life. It is known directly, though in a general way, in every act of self-consciousness, and more complex forms of thought give special meanings to it. In fact, nothing is more intimately or more persistently known, though the highest effort of abstraction is needed for apprehending it in its native simplicity. It is, therefore, an object or item of knowledge and unacceptable on that account as an independent or ultimate principle in an interpretation of empirical existence.

Yoga takes full-orbed experience for a study of its conditions. The simple and blind adjustments of organic life to which science would trace the complex fulness of mental activity are regarded as cases of curable atrophy or of equally curable malformation. \* The highest form is the type and not

\* *Sāmkhya-Sūtras*, III. 47 & 53 and V. 111 make the following statements about the presence of mind wherever there is life: (1) sensibility extends from the Lord of the universe to the meanest clump of grass; (2) every type of existence within these wide limits is capable of experiencing the pain of disease and death, and (3) sensitive bodies are ordinarily developed in moist heat and under the conditions of plant life as well as in the eggs of birds and reptiles and the wombs of higher creatures. *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, IV. 2 & 3 explain that there are no impassable gulfs between these forms of life, merit and demerit being the efficient causes of passage from any of them to higher and lower grades respectively.

merely an episode or after-glow that has appeared somehow in the course of evolution, nor even a legitimate sequel of certain inchoate beginnings. It suffers temporary obscurity in the lower creatures, but it is still there, for life cannot be conceived as going on without the sustaining and controlling influence of thought. Such is the settled conviction of the yogi, and there is not much, therefore, to be said in favour of the view that he derives the duality of experience from elementary feelings without any sort of objective reference. Indeed, he could not do this without ignoring what he holds to be an essential distinction of consciousness and thus obscuring instead of classifying the issue.

Attention is focused accordingly on the kind of experience with which we are familiar. It discloses, of course, an experiencing subject and a multiplicity of experienced objects, for it is in strict truth a process which maintains separateness while mediating between them. And Yoga holds that it accentuates their difference by ascribing to the subject qualities diametrically opposed to the manifoldness and mutability of objects. In fact, this faith in its unchangeableness and perfect simplicity is a clear-cut conception by which we live and act or rather, as we shall presently see, it is a common error which vitiates all the springs of our thought and activity.

But is it one of those misconceptions which can be lightly cast aside when they have been once exposed? No, it is deep as life, as assent is compelled to it by a feature of consciousness which is quite singular. Parallels are, indeed, easily found in the world outside of the interrelation of the various forms of mental functioning. And even the circumstance that thoughts appear cemented often by logical necessities and strung together always in a temporal scheme is not quite exceptional, for time is also the framework on which external events are conceived as hanging together while a certain logical order too is noticeable among them. But the case is different with the simpler and more striking aspect of persistent individuality or self-hood which attends all sorts of psychosis and appears with dazzling clearness in memory and expectation, for all recollections of the past and anticipations of the future become what

they are by relating themselves to the self or ego that owns the present experience.

But here arises a difficulty. This ego is objectified in self-consciousness and reduced thereby to the level of things of which there is a face-to-face presentation. So it cannot pass muster as unique in the full light of philosophical examination specially as it reveals other incoherences to probing thought. Take first its pretension to immutability. An intensive study of the mind does not vouch for it, and even patent appearances would not testify to more than a partial and paradoxical unity. For the self is found to suffer mutation in linking up heterogeneous experience. When I carefully examine myself, I am startled by the change that the past has wrought in me. While the scars of old troubles remain and old amusements are still dear. I have acquired new ways of thinking and feeling, new interests have appeared and new prospects are beckoning me to fresh fields. I cannot, therefore, with due regard for truth say that I am the same person that I was thirty years ago. Yet the feeling of indefeasible identity is there, and it is one which no amount of introspection or logic can exorcise. Hence the conclusion is forced on me that besides the ego which figures as the recipient (*grahitā*) of experience, there is another from which it acquires its semblance of unity and unchangeableness.

Take next the virtues of detachment and simplicity that are unhesitatingly ascribed to it, though a penetrating investigation of mental phenomena shows that it attains various orders of complexity in relating itself to experience of different kinds. Besides, even when we rule out by an effort of abstraction the tangle of thoughts and sentiments with which it is ordinarily encumbered, vestiges of them still remain in the form of dynamic factors like tendencies, impulses and instincts, which bear on them the stamp of previous experience. So this ego or self continues to be coloured by a past which, though seemingly forgotten, refuses to fade completely. At the same time the unity of our mental life is due less to the affinities of its various strands than to the simple consciousness that we stand over against and take note of them without being affected by their multiplicity and heterogeneity. And we can never escape subjection to this form of thought; it is an absolutely controlling influence how-

ever diverse they may be, for without this cement or bond they must fall to pieces.\* Hence experience being what it is, we have to admit that besides the self which discloses itself in consciousness, there is just outside its limits and touching its fringes as it were another which has the distinguishing attributes of immutability and simplicity, and that the two get inextricably mixed up in ordinary thought.

It may be contended that the concepts in question are filtered from common experience, which exhibits different degrees of transitoriness and complexity. And the contention may be set forth in the following way. We notice every shade of mutability among objects and events, and from that we form some notion of persistence in spite of mutations. Of detachment, again, we have undoubtedly some experience, since we exclude thoughts of the past and ignore the future to engross ourselves in the present. But no manipulation of known facts can give us the idea of permanence that excludes the very possibility of mutation, and to such permanence the ego seems to lay an unhesitating claim. The detachment too that is ascribed to it is no less than complete freedom from the push and pressure of every form of experience though to rigid exclusiveness of this type our knowledge of mental structure and process does not testify. And the issue at stake here is not about the veracity of our understanding but about its capacity for manufacturing ideas so foreign to what it discovers within and outside itself, and appearances are against the plea for such a competency.

Another objection is that the shifting phases referred to above belong to personality and not to the self as disclosed in pure self-consciousness. But Yoga denies continuous existence to it for very good reasons and holds that since it is the stuff or basal element of personality, it cannot claim absolute freedom or aloofness from the chameleon-like changes of the latter. So the outstanding result obtained by a critical study of it both *per se* and in its developments is that the riddle of empirical existence cannot be satisfactorily solved by limiting attention to it.

\* This confusion is correctly defined by Prof. Radhakrishnan as not, merely the non-perception (*akhyāti*) of the difference between Intelligence and the mind but a false perception (*anyathākhyāti*) by which the mind is taken to be Intelligence and regarded, therefore, as pure and permanent.

Other facts also point to the conclusion that though the ego may be a convenient resting-place in our quest of ultimate realities, it cannot be the goal. For if it were the knower, pure and simple, it could not forget what it had once known or felt, as it often does, in its attempt to recover the missing thought or feeling. Nor could it be under the necessity of concentrating its gaze on a few of the sundry objects presented to it by the senses. While I am solving a difficult problem, the sights and sounds around me drop out of my consciousness; but they are perceived once more as soon as the solution is over. Such are the limitations and methods (*jñātājñātātā*) of the cognizer, and they indicate clearly that it is only the centre as it were of the apparatus of knowledge and not the real knower with whom there can be but one relation of the known.\*

##### 5. *Intelligence or Purusa*

But can we plunge below the shifting sands of self-consciousness for the true bed-rock of our individuality? And if we can, will not our finding there be an object like other objects, specially as we would ascribe to it certain attributes of which we seem to have a clear conception? The answer is that the existence of this supreme entity is only inferred just as we infer the existence of other minds from phenomena which we cannot otherwise explain and that we form some idea about its nature in the same way as we pass judgment on the motives of other people which we can never directly apprehend. There can, indeed, be no direct knowledge of it in the way of experience (*lokapratyakṣa*) as it is the ultimate cause of every form of it.†

\* Vijñāna-Bhikṣu argues the point in a manner that is interesting for its naiveté. He says that the mind-stuff sometimes represents sounds, etc., and sometimes not because it is mutable, but that *Puruṣa* never fails to acknowledge its object for if he did, the image of the pitcher in my mind might remain unappropriated, so that there would be the possibility of doubting whether the ego perceived the pitcher or not. — *Yoga-Vārtika*, II. 20.

† An uncritical acceptance of the analogy of reflection has led commentators to give up this position or to qualify their adherence to it. Vācaspati Miśra says in his comment on I. 4 that *Puruṣa* cannot be the object of empirical consciousness, but is known through inference or verbal communication from those who must be trusted. But he says elsewhere that the knower is directly perceived like ordinary objects of knowledge in as much as like

But though it cannot be an introspective datum in the narrower sense, it is nonetheless an integral part of our Individuality. And to leave it out of account because it cannot be detected in this way is irrational according to the yogi, because our data, when properly interpreted, indicate the presence of a principle which is not phenomenal in character. He does not overrate or make a mystery of self-consciousness, his analysis of it being thorough enough to satisfy the conscience of any champion of the scientific method. But he points out that this analysis has a supplemental significance which must be rendered in terms that are not applicable to mere phenomena. And to shut our eyes to it solely on that ground is to neglect to make any call on the scientific imagination in the study of the inner world and to accept the enumeration and classification of facts for their explanation.

Self-consciousness then turns out to be more than what it appeared at the outset. It testifies in the first instance to a self that is empirical in character. It testifies also, indirectly indeed but with a remarkable persistence, to another from which the first derives its relative coherence and unity. And it establishes a relation of identity between the two which is fitly expressed in a proposition like "I am the knower." They are, however, disparate, there being the semblance of similarity up to a certain point and considerable unlikeness thereafter. For while the empirical ego is mutable and open to impressions, the knower can never become other than what he is or anything else as well. But though his nature must be repugnant to any kind of

them he is imaged in the mind.—*Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, IV. 23. Viññāna-Bhikṣu has no doubts on the point as it is the nature of the mind-stuff to take the form of what is near it unless there is something to obstruct the impression. And he meets the objection that the knower and the known cannot be identical by observing that the knower does not see himself but only his image in the mind. Another objection also is disposed of by the remark that the knower is not included among knowable things in *sūtra* II. 19, because the purpose of the *sūtra* is to enumerate those objects only which cause pain, while pain cannot be the consequence of a knowledge of the knower—*Yoga-Vārttika*, II. 19. But *sūtra* I 4, states distinctly that he remains undistinguished from mental states so long as the mind does not cease to function. So confusion of thought is avoided by taking the mind coloured by *Puruṣa* to mean self-consciousness or the judgment, 'I am the knower', which is the foundation of all mental activity. And such is the interpretation of Swāmi Hariharānanda in *Bhāṣvati*, IV. 23.



transformation, yet elements that are alien but eminently capable of receiving his light are quickened by his presence and in springing into consciousness create an image of him as the starting-point and centre of their activity.\* - This is the empirical ego which bears traces of its origin in the circumstance that it is both the recipient of experience and an object of it.

6. *Independence of Intelligence a necessary presupposition of conscious life*

The mind-stuff undergoes thus a double transformation, becoming both object and subject. It images the thing to be known in its own way and is organised at the same time and under the influence mentioned above into a cogniser of that image. This is the only way of explaining the mystery of apprehension, the otherwise inexplicable combination of the felt unity and unchangeableness of the experient with the multiplicity of experience and its mutations. But Buddhists with a predilection for simplicity assume that the mind-stuff shines

\* Vācaspati Miśra says that although psychical activity belongs properly to Nature and so should be experienced as insentient, yet it appears to be the activity of Intelligence in the shape of knowledge because the constituents of the mind organise themselves into a semblance of Intelligence. And for the same reason Intelligence comes to be regarded as capable of error and confusion and susceptible to pleasure and pain till discrimination comes.—*Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, I. 4. Bhojarāja compares the erroneous ascription of activity to Intelligence to the impression that the moon rises and falls because its image on the waves does so.—*Rājāmārttaṇḍa*, I. 4. Vijñāna-Bhikṣu calls attention to the twofold misconception involved in the genesis of the empirical ego when he says that owing to mutual reflection, *Buddhi* and *Puruṣa* appear alike, intelligence being ascribed to one of them and pleasure, etc., to the other. But his physical imagery is misleading, and Nāgōji rightly observes that we have here instances of taking a thing to be other than what it is and not of reflection like that of china roses on crystal.—*Vṛtti*, I. 4. Theories and similitudes are due to commentators, and probably the simplest statement of the fundamental disparity between Intelligence and the machinery of thought and conduct as well as of the manner in which they are mixed up is to be found in *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā*, 20, where it is said that the insentient mind appears to be conscious and that though activity belongs exclusively to its constituents, Intelligence comes to be regarded as the agent. The empirical ego is, therefore, an image of the true self, which appears to be mutable and active owing to the nature of the material of which it is formed.

forth as Intelligence without extraneous aid, ignoring the recalcitrant fact that the empirical ego does not survive the mutation in which it appears and so cannot unify unconnected and dissimilar bits of experience. And instead of accounting for this undeniable fact of synthesis, they use it as an argument against the position taken up here when they observe that there is no passage from the assumed unity of the true self to the multiplicity of experience. Śāntarakṣita II puts it pointedly when he says that it is impossible to reconcile the indivisible simplicity ascribed to the knower with the diversity of sights and sounds. \* But these are in the mind as objects of apprehension and are apprehended only because it is aglow with a foreign light from which it acquires the appearance of immutability and unity. And if you simplify matters by falsely conceiving the empirical and particular momentary egos apart from their relation of dependence, you cannot explain how they come to be unified in the continuity of experience.

There is, no doubt, the objection that points of contact are inconceivable between the timeless and the temporal, between the conditionless and the conditioned or, as it has been put in a homely way, that you cannot by laying the axe at the root of a tree fell another at a distance from it.† But the answer is

\* Viññāna-Bhikṣu states the Buddhist theory in his own way and then meets it. Why, he asks, must the mind have a proprietor and not own the experience which is made up of its own states? And he answers that it cannot be both agent and patient at the same time, or, in other words, that it cannot be its own object of experience. All the show of the world is represented in it, and so it is the universal spectacle itself, but it realises its nature or becomes a reality only by becoming an object in relation to *Puruṣa*.—*Yoga-Vārttika*, II. 19. Vācaspati Miśra puts the question more pointedly and gives the objection to the Buddhist theory in greater detail. Why, says, he, do we not admit the identity of *Puruṣa* and *Buddhi* instead of postulating reflection of one on the other? And his reply is that *Buddhi* is mutable since it takes the forms of different objects at different times, that it must be constituted like them to be able to take their forms and that like other mechanical agents it works with accessories for an object that points to something beyond itself, while *Puruṣa* does not appear to work for another.—*Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, II. 20.

† *Tattva-Saṃgraha*, *Ātma-Parikṣā*, verse 287 Kamalaśīla says that even if contact with the conditionless is postulated, such contact cannot be shown to be productive of results, for if Intelligence does not appropriate pleasures

that a careful analysis of mental facts discloses such a connection. The empirical ego is given immediately in self-consciousness and so requires for its apprehension another principle which has not its dual character, for the ultimate observer cannot be an object. And you do not get over this difficulty by imagining a second empirical ego which cognises the first, for this second too will stand in need of a third for its apprehension. Hence you must fall back on the doctrine that there is an entity which never comes within the ambit of experience because it is "the fountain light of all our day, the master-light of all our seeing."

And yet it is not like the transcendental ego of some Western philosophers who contrast it with the momentary and many-coloured egos of concrete thought by saying that it lies in the background and lays out the field of experience by the application of certain fundamental logical concepts to the unconnected manifold of sense-presentations. Such an ego is an active, organising, synthetic principle never far from the amorphous material that defines its operations. But the true self is confronted by nothing through which it must find expression; it is a subject with no otherness opposed to it. What then is the nature of the connection between it and the mind-stuff? Simply this — the materials of the latter are so combined as to develop into an adequate instrument of experience in the light of the former without waiting for direct intervention. Such is their character, for though our finite experience touches everywhere on the infinite and absolute, yet even its most general and elementary forms have the brand of mutability and dependence, so that you cannot catch the ultimate principle anywhere as an agent or a constituent.

There is not the slightest excuse then for the self-sufficiency claimed for the mind. As already observed, even the empirical ego, the central thing in it is the object in self-consciousness, and as object it is the negation of consciousness, even an unconscious reality. So it shines by a borrowed light when it appears to be intelligent on its own account. An imperfect

and pains as its own but remains unconcerned or unaffected, as circumambient space is by the events happening therein, it cannot in any sense be regarded as the cause of experience. See *Pañjikā*, *Ātma-Parīkṣā*, verse 295.

similitude may serve to bring out the nature of its dependence. The moon is up in the sky and yet the ocean below catches the light and exhibits in consequence an endless variety of lights and shades only because it is fitted to form an image of the luminary. So the moon does not actively cause the transformation though if it was not there all would relapse into undistinguished darkness.

#### *7. Unavoidable obscurity of the concept*

Another obvious criticism of this theory is that the real self is shadowy or spectral and that the language of mysticism and poetry is freely employed in defining its relation to concrete experience. It appears, indeed, to be a serious charge as vague tropes are out of place in philosophy, which neglects, therefore, an elementary caution when it abandons sober and precise statements for expressions that touch the imagination or appeal to the feelings. And there is a twofold danger in such a betrayal of trust as hypotheses which are not amenable to the canons of sifting evidence can be neither proved nor disproved while there is a fascinating atmosphere of grandeur and glory about the unknown and unknowable. But there is the tendency also in a certain class of thinkers to close great questions by the triumphant flourish of principles which are applicable only to observed relations of facts. So a few words are necessary for clearing the issue between Yoga and empiricism in this connection. Yoga is at one with the positive method of thought in starting from sensation and introspection and in regarding them as the ultimate materials of all knowledge. But it differs in holding that these, when rightly interpreted, point to entities that are not capable of being perceived by the senses or represented by the imagination. And in doing so, it asserts only the competency of inference to go beyond observation which can give us but the phenomenal causes or invariable antecedents of things while we look always and not unreasonably for their reasons. So instead of paltering with an unregulated fancy in its quest of final realities, it relies more thoroughly on logic than they do who hold that logic or correct reasoning merely economises labour by furnishing short-cuts to

facts that may be always perceived by the senses or by turning the gaze inwards.

The method of Yoga is thus the orthodox method of science. It makes sure of its facts and then proceeds from them as signs to things signified. But what marks it off from positive thought is that it does not recoil from final conclusions merely because they cannot be verified in the ordinary channels of knowledge. If this, however, were a serious objection, the highest concepts of modern science must go down with the principles of Yoga, since they too are disparate to the world of familiar facts. Still it may be objected that the theory in question lacks the preciseness of scientific generalisations, while matters are made worse by loading it with the adventitious decorations of poetry, so that the expressions used hang very loosely on the ideas which they endeavour to convey. But language has a double imperfection to its credit in this connection, *viz.*, the imperfection which belongs to all ordinary thought on supersensual matters and that which arises from the primary and intimate association of words with objects of sense. So it is always difficult to communicate spiritual truths with that distinctness which belongs to statements about things that may be visualised in a way even when they cannot be measured, weighed, and dissected. Besides, it requires a trained mind and repeated effort for a proper comprehension of those truths. The real self, for instance, is not quite spectral to the disciplined mind of the yogī because he can focus it properly on the implications of self-consciousness. But for a preliminary apprehension, metaphors and analogies may be helpful in spite of their admitted drawbacks.

As, however, these poetical embellishments have attracted more attention than the strength of the arguments against phenomenalism and agnosticism, these are re-stated below even at the risk of tiring the reader. Self-consciousness develops itself, according to this system, into a countless variety of thoughts, feelings and volitions at the call of objects that are outside it. And the ego or self round which they centre submits to the same influence, as it has no existence apart from the consciousness in which it appears. In other words, it feels all the strain that is involved in squaring new experience with old

or in grafting fresh opinions on those that have been previously held. This stress is striking, indeed, only when emotional or conative tendencies take the lead. For instance, when face to face with a sudden danger or an unexpected trouble, I am not quite the same man that I was a few minutes ago, as my whole being becomes at once tensely charged with feeling. But even in the absence of disturbing factors of exceptional magnitude, this consciousness of individuality changes from moment to moment. It makes and remakes itself as it goes. Where then does it get the idea of immutable and indivisible unity that is at the bottom of all its activities ?

#### 8. *Buddhist explanation of the continuity of conscious life*

The answer of the Buddhist is that similar facts of consciousness, rapidly succeeding one another, generate and keep alive this sense of continued and unchanged existence. But the self maintains its unity from the cradle to the grave or at least as far as memory stretches, though nothing can be more unlike than the exuberant joyousness of childhood and the cheerless monotony of age. The change is, no doubt, very gradual and as it comes by imperceptible stages, it appears striking only to an extensive retrospect while similarity is generally conspicuous in shorter strands of experience. And this lends colour to the view that pulses of psychosis may be momentary and unrelated except in the way of sequence, and yet owing to the absence of gaps in mental life, the indecomposable unity that belongs to each of them may run like a continuous thread throughout their succession thus simulating an entity that remains self-identical in spite of the mutations of experience. But these perishing pulses are credited then with the remarkable virtue of recollecting their antecedents merely because they happen to be contiguous and similar. Contiguity, however, is not a bond in Nature while the apprehension of similarity involves the co-presence of more facts than one between which a comparison is instituted.\* And even then the impression can be only of similarity of experiences; whereas alongside of this perception of mere resemblance there is the

\* See *Sāṃkhya-Sūtras*, I. 35, 39, 40 & 41.

unalterable conviction that the experient himself has remained the same and is able, therefore, to take the resemblance of passing phases into account.\*

Śāntaraksita observes that Intelligence is mutable if it enters into definite relations with the world of objects to construct the fabric of experience. \*\*And he contends like other Buddhists that the theory of a timeless principle existing in solitary grandeur outside the sphere of phenomena and yet giving them all their value is untenable. We have, according to him, no more than a series of radiant but fleeting appearances in which intelligence and its object are inextricably combined and out of which they have no existence whatsoever. So there is perpetual flux without stability anywhere or, to vary the metaphor, pure surface without anything on which it may rest. But one may ask how mutations come to be perceived as such by what is eminently mutable. Psychical facts, again, do not furnish their own explanation. They require a complement, since they converge as experience towards a common point of reference which cannot be detected in their particular and flash-like existence. They pass beyond the horizon treading on each other's heels, and the question still lies on our hands, what it is that abides to relate them in the unity of experience and the still more explicit unity of recollection, which is certainly more than the mere revival of past impressions. Śāntaraksita does not seem to face it squarely; but it suggests the answer that there is a self-subsistent and changeless entity from which the passing phases of experience derive their semblance of unity and substantiality.†

\* Kamalaśīla says in his commentary on the *Tattva-Samgraha* that this conviction is not an irrefragable proof of the existence of an enduring self. But assuming that it is not, there must be still some good reason for the genesis, persistence and universality of this fiction of indiscerptible identity.

\*\* *Tattva-Samgraha*, *Ātma-Parīkṣā* verses 294 and 295. The objection is based on a failure to appreciate the relation between experience (*bhoga*) and pure intelligence as conceived by the yogi. Intelligence is not the experient or the enjoyer. But all experience is due to it as association with it converts the inert and obscure constituents of the mind into an active and sentient principle.

† Śāntaraksita's commentator, Kamalaśīla admits that the mind is composed of diverse elements. But he would not go farther than that. An explanation, however, is needed of the remarkable fact that they act in

His argument is that the constituents of experience as laid bare by reflective analysis do not disclose an essence that is immune from generation, development and decay. But the most thorough-going analysis has no claim to be regarded as a philosophical explanation unless it is supplemented by a satisfactory account of the nature and origin of the thing dissected. You explain a living tree properly only when besides enumerating its perceptible parts, you refer to the imperceptible energy to which they owe their sustenance, growth and co-ordination. So here too you must cast your net more widely than the Buddhists as the problem is not one of mere description or analysis of experience. They seem moreover to confuse the uninterrupted sequence of mental facts with their indefeasible confluence even when they are separated in time and dissimilar in character. The significant fact is that irreducible differences in quality and temporal setting do not prevent them from becoming parts of a distinctive unity. And the only explanation that can be offered of it is that somewhere there shines an unchanging splendour in the light of which they get organized. That the unifying principle should stand apart from the manifold thus integrated is, indeed, a condition of the unification.

The Buddhist philosophers appear to be guilty of another confusion in identifying pure Intelligence with particular states of consciousness. These are placid or agitated or abortive; but Intelligence as such can never have these phases.\* Nor can it be conceived as susceptible of varying intensity and liable to extinction like them. Lastly, activity and development cannot be attributed to it, since being objects of apprehension, they cannot be its causes too. So rightly understood, there is no becoming in it and no causality or doing in the run of time. Yet it is the sustainer of all existence as the objectivity of the universe and the synthesis of experience cannot arise out of a fortuitous sequence of unrelated happenings. There is, no doubt, a real difficulty in conceiving an entity that maintains its independence

conjunction to produce a self-conscious entity that feels itself to be one and indivisible and relates its present with its past. For the mind appears to represent on the one hand something which is capable of being known as manifold and mutable and on the other a principle opposed to it which remains eternally the same.

\* See *Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, I., 4.



while achieving so much. But as phenomenal causes are generally dependent on some sort of change within or outside them for producing their effects and the entity in question remains unalterably the same, the difficulty cannot be removed by apposite illustrations, though it has no existence for those who are able to think out philosophical problems resolutely and to the end. An illustration, however, is often hazarded, which may be helpful if the spatial references in it are clearly recognised as inapplicable to what is not in space or time. The lamp in front of your mirror does not get inside it to produce the image that is there, though that image lights up its surface and enables it to reveal other things. The lamp is pure Intelligence, the image is the empirical ego or self-consciousness and the mirror is the mind-stuff, which is so constituted as to develop into a succession of conscious states in the mere presence of Intelligence though the latter maintains its aloofness throughout.

Such an explanation cannot, indeed, be squeezed out of observation and analysis, and so it may appear to some as a windy and ineffective periphrasis. But the facts that require an interpretation must be taken into account. Objects cannot conspire to generate a consciousness of themselves, nor can floating psychological states set up a self with better claims to reality than theirs. Even their unbroken continuity craves an explanation as it cannot be accidental. And experience is not merely a continuity as it testifies to unity in multiplicity or permanence in change. Lastly, though we find processes lit up by awareness, yet of awareness or Intelligence, process or movement can form no part, as movement is an object of which we become aware. This Intelligence seems, no doubt, very shadowy and so it is ordinarily identified with the mind in action. But the yogī claims that as we shed the details of our personality one after another in our effort to rise above the mechanism of Nature, it becomes more and more real till at last it is felt to be the ultimate reality. And this is a claim which cannot be summarily rejected as metaphysics derives its chief value from the circumstance that it is based on spiritual experiences.

#### *9. Intelligence not the subject in dualistic experience*

Yoga and some Western systems of thought move on

parallel lines up to a certain point and then diverge. So there is some risk of confusing their concepts unless subtle but essential differences are kept steadily in view. The transcendental philosophy holds, for example, that object and subject are given at the same time in consciousness out of which they have no meaning or reality and that they are so interrelated as to make it like a seamless garment which cannot be divided into parts. Such is also the position of Yoga when it says that conscious life is a continuous judgment which sustains by its affirmations the opposed but intimately connected worlds of inner and outer appearances. But these appearances point to two unconditional types of existence which are logically antecedent to every experience. For a thing must exist before it appears or reveals itself to consciousness, while there must be the principle of Intelligence before anything can be known.

The transcendental philosophy refuses, however, to draw this obvious inference on the ground that the subject-in-itself and the object-in-itself are contradictions in terms so that there can be no sense in speaking of their respective contributions to the composite whole of knowledge. But this argument does not meet the contention of the yogi who endorses the view that the subject is known only in relation to the object and so cannot be conceived as existing by itself, while the object is as it is known to us. For his contention is that there must be beyond the more or less fleeting appearances that make up our objects something which persists but is itself imperceptible, some impalpable energy or principle to which they are due but which alone cannot account for them, as revelation or appearance presupposes intelligence. Intelligence is, therefore, the correlate of all sorts of manifestation, which are its consequences and not its parts, as it cannot be evolved out of any number of them.

But the transcendental philosophy is prevented by its critical method from accepting this conclusion. It takes the fact of experience and moving strictly within its limits asks what are its constituents and not how it comes into being. It is thus an exposition of the nature of knowledge and not an account of its genesis. But the problem of knowing points beyond itself to the other problem of being, and so we have only an unaccented reading of it in this system. It stops short at any rate of

legitimate conclusions, its excuse being that the discursive intellect is unequal to the task of peering beyond the realm of phenomena. This, however, is a definite acknowledgment of intellectual bankruptcy, very unlike the claim of the yogi who holds that the mind is equally capable of spiritual insight and secular knowledge.\*

#### 10. *Intelligence not self-consciousness*

Another Western school takes self-consciousness to be unique and all-important and regards existence as its progressive evolution, in the course of which objects apparently foreign come to be recognised as necessary conditions of its growth and thus to derive all the significance that belongs to them. There is much in common between this view and the yogic conception of self-consciousness as the basal factor on which the whole superstructure of conscious life is erected. But duality belongs to its essence, and of the self disclosed in it different things are explicitly or tacitly predicated according to circumstances. So it is an object of apprehension, and the question remains how it comes to be apprehended. To such a question the only possible answer is that there must be a principle to which it is a sort of object, a principle which, remaining itself unrevealed, reveals everything else, for as the *sine qua non* of all cognition it can never be directly cognised, though it must be present in every item of experience. Some have classed it, indeed, with mere negations or likened it to the night in which all cows are black. But it is like the power of vision which enables you to see cows of every shade of colour though it must always remain unseen.† For how can the source of all consciousness appear within the sphere in which the ego nourishes itself by becoming conscious of objective appearances and of its own life in relation to them? It can never by any

\* The competency of the mind for all sorts of knowledge is definitely asserted and accounted for in *Sūtra*, IV. 23 and comments thereon.

† It is like the power of seeing and not like the energy in the ocular apparatus which appears in certain changes and movements. The mind with its processes is like the latter and is called therefore, *darśana-śakti*, while Intelligence is called *ākṣakti* to suggest that processes form no part of apprehension by it.

possibility be an object of apprehension as all apprehension presupposes it.

#### 11. *Intelligence and the empirical self*

Much philosophical thought gets ship-wrecked, in fact, on the unsifted identification of the ego with this ultimate principle. The ego is the sole object-for-experience in self-consciousness and is apprehended as the thinking principle or as the owner *in posse* of other objects of knowledge, while in more complex experience it appears as that which perceives, reflects, remembers or strives. But pure Intelligence must be static and not a machine in action or at rest like the ego or any other object that stands revealed in its light.

But though direct knowledge of it is impossible, yet we are able to characterise it with a certain measure of confidence from a critical study of the fundamental postulates of thought. It must be one and indivisible as the continuity of personal history cannot be otherwise explained. It must be immutable too since the stress and strain of divers and even conflicting experience do not affect the conviction of absolute sameness that is in us. There cannot be that duality of object presented and subject enlightened in it, since it transcends this division as the ultimate cause of every variety of concrete experience. So it is knowledge without any kind of limitation, but not omniscience, for in omniscience too there is the antithesis of personal knower and all sorts of knowable things. The type of infinity that is attributed to it should be distinguished, therefore, from that which we ascribe to objects which are directly but only partially cognisable owing to the imperfection of our powers of comprehension or to the absence of any assignable limits to their immensity. And it is appropriately characterised by saying that it is beyond time and space which, so far as they are realities, are constructions of the understanding to serve as receptacles for the dates and events that we know, while it is never an object of knowledge.

Our conscious life is punctuated, on the other hand, by time. Through time it relates itself to the complex fullness of external actuality, which appears on examination to consist of transitory

forms shaped more or less by an alien force.\* And in this development, it has not merely all the flux of those transitory appearances but also some of their variety and freshness, for thus alone can it maintain the requisite intimacy with a succession of facts.† There is, moreover, complete reciprocity between it and them, as the mind-stuff is the centre also of desire and impulse, through which it modifies the external conditions that affect it in the way of knowledge. And this close and constant relation of give and take coupled with the circumstance that its proper activities are quite as amenable to observation and analysis as are the processes and movements reflected on it from outside, points to the conclusion that it is built up of the same materials which enter into the composition of its environment. The common tendency, therefore, to class them apart has nothing to support it beyond the uncritical assumption that Nature is too gross to develop into anything higher than what are regarded as its characteristic forms.

## 12. *Intelligence and the world of knowables*

The grand distinction for the yogī is then not between matter and mind but between objects of knowledge, actual or potential, and knowledge itself when free from every kind of limitation.\*\* Even the distinction between subject and object or self and not-self is misleading as each of them makes a bid for

\* Vijñāna-Bhikṣu stresses this temporal order of mental facts and accounts for it by saying that knowledge of things results from the mind's becoming like them according as they colour it. The nature, again, of the influence he explains by comparing them to magnets because without leaving their places they are able to attract the active mind to themselves and to give it their respective tints in much the same way as lac dyes a piece of cloth. Hence the sequence of ideas corresponds to the sequence of events. —*Yoga-Vārtika*, IV. 17.

† Commentators, whatever their differences may be, are agreed that the mutations of the mind alone are objects of knowledge, the things that colour it being only indirectly apprehended.

\*\* The yogic name is *jñamātra* or merely awareness. To call it *Jñātā* or the knower is to ascribe activity to it and activity which is limited in every case by the nature of the object known. But activity is not of the essence of knowledge or awareness, which may exist moreover without being induced by anything outside it. See *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*, II. 20.

inclusion in the other when the conditions change. You have been angry and injudicious; but good sense follows and you sit in judgment over your angry self thus converting it into an object. You have reasoned well and made a happy discovery, and the next moment you congratulate yourself or indulge in a flattering comparison with others who have failed. Thus you become an object in your practical and theoretical relations as soon as you turn your gaze inwards. In fact, even the most intimate features of the subject can be focused as objects where, as in the case of the yogi, the power of introspection is sufficiently keen and alert. Similarly, the object gets assimilated to the subject in the act of apprehension, for when you turn from a thing to attend to another, the thought of the first colours your outlook or determines your attitude in some measure towards the second. If, however, subject and object can change place in this way and lack fixity of character, you have no good reason for recognising one of them as the author and owner of the other. They are both felt as shifting limits of consciousness and so cannot be its cause.

In other words, they are appearances. But appearances presuppose some force, entity or principle that appears and alongside of it some principle to which the apprehension of its appearances is due, for how can it appear or shine forth without being apprehended? There are thus four types of existence, viz., appearance as the object of cognition, appearance as the cogniser, the entity that has this twofold manifestation and the entity that makes manifestation possible by furnishing the necessary condition of apprehension. To deny reality to appearances is unreasonable for nothing is closer to us or more obtrusive and insistent in its appeal than they. And to shut our eyes to their causes is to condemn ourselves to an attitude of in consequence. The yogi is at one with Western agnosticism in holding that the ultimate causes of phenomena do not lie strewn on the highroad of sensuous existence. But he does not accept the view that they are separated from their effects by all the gulf which stretches between the comprehensible and the incomprehensible. Nor does he reduce them to a single unintelligent principle to which both cognition and its objects may be traced. And he joins issue at the same time with Indian

monists on the ground that there can be no passage from the Absolute that they love to contemplate to the relative and diverse without a second principle which furnishes objects of experience and of which mutability is the law. But like the monists he draws a line not quite so clear to the untrained mind between knowledge which brings together the cogniser and the cognised as distinct entities and that which is independent of such a distinction or in which Intelligence is not limited by something recognised as foreign to itself.

Such a principle is not, of course, to be directly apprehended in our ordinary waking hours, when facts in all their crude variety are forcing themselves on us. Nor does it appear in our dreams when we have ceased to feel the coercions of the world outside but are alive to the images and thoughts suggested by them. Nor even in sleep do we discover it, shut up as our minds are at the time with an indistinct and transient feeling of our physical condition. It is not like consciousness which reveals objects beyond the self by relating it to them. Nor is it a sub-conscious factor, which emerges into consciousness at the instance of the appropriate stimulus. But all the same it is in every form of experience, for without its quickening presence the divers and mutable constituents of the mind cannot get organised as consciousness by a self.\*

This recipient then of experience (*grahitā*), this consciousness of the self as the cogniser is the meeting-ground of two very different principles, the endless phases of one of them being the staple of our many-coloured life while the other remains necessarily unobserved, for who shall know the knower? Yet it testifies to both of them in the complexity of its nature and is, therefore,

\* Vijnāna-Bhikṣu observes that the direct cause of knowledge is the transformation of the mind-stuff into the likeness of its object. Intelligence is immutable and so takes no part in the process. But the form in the mind comes to be known because the image of Intelligence in the mind renders it conscious as the image of the sun in a sheet of water makes it luminous or like the sun. The explanation may be taken for what it is worth; but it emphasizes, at least, the important truth that though the contents of consciousness are determined by an antecedent activity which is more or less mechanical in character, yet consciousness must be traced to a different source. See *Yoga-Vārttika*, II. 20 and IV. 22.

rightly regarded as their index (*liṅgam*). But while it has much to say about the former in its incessant mutations, of the latter it offers only a remote, confused and generally misunderstood hint in its incongruous combination of simplicity with diversity and of subject with object contents. But we have to be content with it such as it is, for as *Pañcaśikha* says, there is no other way of apprehending Intelligence in the way of experience.\* So the indefeasible unity of the knower is both obscured and revealed in the multiplicity and limitation of particular states of consciousness just as the orb of the moon appears broken in its image on dancing ripples.

But how does it remain unrecognised when it is in every state of consciousness? We do not miss it entirely for, as already observed, the empirical ego is an image of it. We get, however, a poor transcript of the reality in this way like the reflection of the moon in a turbid stream. For it appears mutable because it is associated with fleeting mental facts and is known through them; and owing to the very same association they appear to be conscious in their own right. Is its glory then liable to be obscured in the dust of human experience? No, it is our vision that is dimmed thereby while its glory remains undiminished. Familiar examples may be of some use in comprehending this paradox. The sun grows dark when the moon gets between it and the earth. But does its splendour suffer abatement because you fail to see it through a dark body? A crystal vase appears red when china roses are in it. But does it lose its stainless transparency because it holds them or is your mode of perceiving light and colour responsible for the change in its appearance? Or, again, does a pearl become other than what it is because you take it from a distance for a bit of silver? The error is in your judgment or in the mental activities anterior to it, both of which are but processes, steeped though they are in the light of Intelligence. A similar error vitiates your conception of the true self when you suppose that it may be tranquil, active and confused by turns because mutations like these occur in self-consciousness. It is like the hasty inference of the man who thinks

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, *Taitva-Vaiśārādī* and *Bhāsvatī*, I. 4.



that his face has suddenly grown dark because the dirty mirror before him fails to reflect it faithfully.\*

### 13. *The relation between the two*

It is, of course, by a stretch of metaphor that words like association and glory are used in describing its relation to mental facts. Proximity to it in space or even time must be out of the question as it is beyond both of them, and what is implied, therefore, is fitness for serving as instruments of knowledge.† Glory too must mean that virtue in it owing to which inferior materials come to be invested with consciousness. How this can happen we do not know, but it happens nonetheless. After all, it must be ascribed to their fitness for the purpose, which converts itself into inspiration and impulse, for activity even of the most exalted order cannot be ascribed to Intelligence as activity involves the idea of time if not also of space and implies at least passage from one state to another which is mutation.

Even 'omnipresent' and 'eternal' would be inappropriate epithets, as it is the source of that consciousness which builds up space and time as media of continuity among facts. It is described, indeed, in the Scriptures as "upholding the sun and the moon, the heavens and the earth." But that is because they would cease to

\* See *Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, I. 4.

† This is Vācaspati Miśra's explanation. Vijñāna-Bhikṣu takes association more literally and defends his view-point by saying that contact with other things does not necessarily involve mutability, which consists in the appearance of new attributes in place of old ones. Nor does it imply limitation according to him, since space remains boundless though the pitcher occupies a portion of it. Swāmi Bālarāmodāśin disposes of this argument by saying that contact is meaningless with reference to entities that are formless or beyond time and space. Swāmi Hariharānanda says that proximity in this connection means the presence in every conscious state of Intelligence and certain activities and dispositions which must be ascribed to the mind. He leaves it at that without offering an explanation of what he regards as an ultimate fact. Leaving aside speculative ingenuity, we may say that all commentators agree in holding that finite thought is the combination of two disparate things. And this is what Vyāsa implies when he says that Intelligence is that to which the materials of thought (*viśayas*) are presented by the mind for cognition. See notes on *sūtras* I. 4, II. 17 and II. 23.

be manifest and, therefore, to be when deprived of the light of knowledge. And so we must not understand the passage as meaning that it pervades all space and thus convert it in a manner into an object of knowledge. Similarly, 'infinitude' is a term which cannot be properly used to characterise it, as in ordinary parlance it conveys the notion of countless parts which can never be completely known. In other words, the sense of limit is present in the concept so far as it is positive, though that limit is continually shifted, whereas any idea of limit or mutual exclusion of parts cannot be associated with our conception of Intelligence. 'Perfect' or 'complete all round' is, therefore, the epithet for it inasmuch as it is unconditioned knowledge, specific determinations or rather imperfect reflections of which sum up all that we are and have access to at present.

It is thus in a sense the principle of life. Whatever else there may be is a mere potentiality and becomes manifest or a fact only through its presence. But the diversity of our experience would prevent us from inferring that there is only one such principle. I feel that as a knower I am different from you. And though your experience may be communicated to me, it can never have that warmth and intimacy which belong to mine. Even where men's experiences have been very similar, where they have lived under the same conditions and inherited tastes and aptitudes not at all unlike, there is a uniqueness about each of these experiences that forbids community and resists invasion. The selves remain perfectly impervious to one another. So we are bound to admit that the vivifying principle is different in these cases. But does not plurality imply limitation? It does, but only in the case of objects that occupy space, for even ordinary knowledge does not appear to be limited or cut up by plurality. When ten men see the moon, each sees the whole and not a tenth of that luminary. Knowledge is, indeed, divided or broken up by time when it appears to be a series of distinct and diverse activities. Such diversity does not exist, however, in absolute knowledge. This should be enough by way of a rejoinder to those who dogmatically assert that all living beings are animated by a single Intelligence. But philosophy may leave the question open though the study of individuality offers

plausible reasons for declaring in favour of a plurality of Intelligences.\*

There is a tendency even among thinkers to confound this vivifying principle with the empirical ego which is the first and purest expression of life. But this ego is an object among objects, being determined like them by time and circumstances. It lives by distinguishing itself from other things and in its familiar phases changes and grows by absorption of foreign materials. To Intelligence, on the other hand, determinants and all that is determined by them owe their actuality, and so it cannot be conceived as changing or developing. The most general conditions of change or progress are time and space; but even these become intelligible or actual in relation to it. Time has, indeed, been regarded sometimes as an independent principle of synthesis which weaves together all sorts of events into a coherent system. But so far as it has any reality, it consists of mutations which are perceived in a certain order, and they cannot be so perceived except with reference to some principle which does not identify itself with any of them but remains self-identical throughout. In other words, a background is required against which the divisions of time as filled out by subjective feeling or objective perception may be apprehended to appear and vanish. And pure Intelligence is such a background, for in it there can be "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." It does not enter into process or come into being, while the empirical ego is justly regarded as part of the process of experience.†

It may be urged, indeed, that the ego is not an object in the ordinary sense, as objective existence coalesces in it with awareness of that existence. But there cannot be this coalescence

\* Swāmi Hariharānanda's arguments in favour of suspension of judgment on this question are like the following. You distinguish similar things from one another by noticing that they are not alike in every respect or by observing that they are separated by time or space. But one Intelligence must be exactly like another and each is beyond both time and space, so that the materials are wanting for the application of the category of number. See *Bhāsvatī*, I. 24, foot-note.

† Bhojarāja says that there is no mediation or activity in the knowledge of Puruṣa and supports his view by taking *anu* in *anupaśyaḥ* in II, 20 to mean "without anything between (the knower and the known)—*Rājamārttaṇḍa*, II. 20.

unless the materials which enter into its composition as items of experience are bathed and transformed in an alien light. If you imagine that they can do without it, you tacitly assume that consciousness is but an efflorescence of unconscious things. If you hold, on the other hand, that they have nothing to do with it, you shut your eyes to its development. For it exhibits at every stage the reciprocity of perception, the apparently centripetal activity of even self-consciousness, which is its purest form, being dependent on some sort of stimulus from without. So if you are sufficiently on your guard against the seductive simplification of a complex fact and fully alive to the difference between knowledge and its object, you must say that alongside of the materials of experience there is a principle in relation to which they get organised into a peculiar unity.

We cannot, according to the yogī, go beyond this conjunction (*samyoga*) in our explanation of life and all that stands for.\* But

\* There is, however, considerable divergence of opinion about the nature of this conjunction. Vijñāna-Bhikṣu speaks of two kinds of conjunction. There is first the natural and necessary relation of the knower and the knowable, and this cannot be severed as both of them are co-extensive with space and time. But there is the other conjunction of the knower with objects as set forth in the finite mind and touched with the tints of pleasure and pain. This special conjunction is like that of fuel with fire and must be put an end to.—*Yoga-Vārttika*, II. 23. But Bālarāmodāsin objects to the distinction because the natural relation of which Vijñāna-Bhikṣu speaks is not relation but only fitness for it, while it does not follow from the omnipresence of the knower and the knowable that they must be in contact since they are in their original character immaterial entities. Bhojarāja says that it is no more than the everlasting knowableness of the knowable and knowingness of the knower which result ultimately in a complete apprehension of both—*Rājamārttāṇḍa* II. 23. Rāmānanda Yati says that it is the felt relation of property and proprietor between mind and Intelligence. The mind is transformed into the likeness of objects which it is able to observe because the light of Intelligence is on it. Thus it becomes the property of Intelligence which is taken to be its lord and to which, therefore, it ascribes both experience (*bhoga*) and salvation (*apavarga*), though these belong properly to itself—*Maniprabhā*, II. 17. Bhāvāgaṇeśa holds that the connection is only another name for phenomenal existence commencing with each birth. It makes the knower and the known appear as proprietor and property and brings about the realisation of their respective natures by enjoyment of objects and cognition of the self. But their relation in a general way, being for all time, cannot be avoided. It is not the cause of suffering,

in defining its nature, we may say that it arises out of a misconception, since in self-consciousness where this conjunction appears in its original simplicity, the self, which is a more or less determinate object of experience, is identified with that which can never be an object. The error is not easily detected and is generally ignored even after it has been discovered, because the self in self-consciousness is the most ethereal of objects. But this primary illusion proves an all-pervading deceit, as all experience is based on self-consciousness. In fact, it becomes more and more complex and determinate with the multiplication of objective relations, so that experience may be regarded as the development of a hallucination. It follows that our so-called truths contain always an admixture of error and that the nearest approach to absolute truth is made when the empirical ego is distinguished from its immutable prototype.

Students of Yoga often add to the difficulty of the subject by treating the correlation of Intelligence and Nature like an event in time of which error must be the antecedent if it is to be accepted as the cause. For then they cannot avoid the crux that error cannot appear in Nature before it has been organised and animated by Intelligence, while it is through error that Nature comes to be so organised. And they feel tempted to dispose of the Gordian knot in the heroic style with the distinction that the error as a fact of consciousness is in Intelligence while the mechanical process anterior to it is of the inchoate mind. But the process cannot start before the conjunction, and Intelligence cannot have the vicious twist ascribed to it. It is called the experient because unconscious or unrelated experience is a contradiction in terms and not because it converts itself by a sort of metaphysical *volte face* into an objective person. That development belongs to Nature which thus remains an object even in its highest manifestation though it takes on at the same time a

and to rule it out, even if that were possible, would be to rule out knowledge. —*Pradīpikā*, II. 23. The view here given is that of Vācaspati Miśra, who says that experience is characterised throughout by lack of discrimination between the knower and the known. There is, according to him, a world of difference between empirical consciousness which has all the variability of processes and absolute thought or Intelligence which does not stand in need of them.—*Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, I. 4.

new character as the central or fundamental fact in the world of cognised objects. So the explanation complicates the problem by suggesting an untenable division of functions between Intelligence and the mind.

Much the same may be said of the classic attempts to elucidate it by what Das Gupta aptly characterises as metaphysical fictions. Bhojarāja strains a point when relying presumably on his own interpretation of a passage in the *Pāncasīkha Sūtras*, he assumes that Nature has in it the germ of thought or consciousness which remains inarticulate or inoperative owing to association with adverse elements till it is quickened by contact with the immutable Intelligence beyond. Vācaspati says that light from Intelligence gives definiteness to the formless and directionless energy outside it by creating the subject-object relation and thus furnishing the essentials of experience. And Vijñāna-Bhikṣu seeks to improve upon this gloss by suggesting that all sorts of experience are reflected on Intelligence and thus integrated in spite of their manifoldness. \*Lastly, there is the parable of the lame man getting on the shoulders of the blind and thus travelling to a common destination as an example of the manner in which Intelligence co-operates with Nature.†

These poetical excursions in the realm of philosophy have a certain value in so far as they call attention to the baffling complexity of conscious existence. But they do not account for it, nor can we press very far the analogies on which they are based. So Das Gupta turns from them to the authoritative *Bhāṣya*

\* Probably no great writer on Yoga has carried farther than Vijñāna-Bhikṣu this similitude of reflection, though inferior commentators coming after him have only too readily adopted his standpoint and thus converted what was originally an explanatory analogy into a metaphysical account of the origin of consciousness. It is loose thinking of this sort that is attacked by Śāntaraksita in *Tattva-Saṃgraha*, verse 298, where he says that if experience arises out of reflection or impression on Intelligence, then the latter is certainly mutable. But the correct Sāṃkhya and Yoga doctrine is that experience and deliverance from it are due to the activity of the self-conscious mind. See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 18 & *Sāṃkhya-Sūtra*, I. 58.

† This simile is sneeringly referred to by Śāntaraksita in *Tattva-Saṃgraha*, *Ātma Parīkṣā* verse 292. But *Purusa*, complete as he is has no goal to travel to. It is the individual, both purblind and halt as he is, that must undertake a long and difficult journey.

which stresses the fact of conjunction of the contradictory principles and says that it is beginningless and, therefore, causeless. Still it must be thoroughly intelligible before it can find a legitimate place in an interpretation of life. We have on the one side Intelligence which exists in and for itself or as a world above mutation and extraneous influence, for how can Intelligence change into anything else or what is there to limit it besides itself? On the other there is a limitless store of forces held in equipoise by their own opposition, but ready to develop into the world of experience, *i. e.*, of facts and their ideas with their ceaseless mutation when that equilibrium is upset. Now the question is, whence comes the impetus that starts this universal show? It cannot be traced to Intelligence because activity and movement are foreign to it. Nor can it be assigned to Nature for its original repose is due to an internal adjustment which can be disturbed only from outside.

The question when put in this way may appear obscure at this stage of our study. But the following statement of it may serve to bring out the difficulty in the conception. Intelligence is conceived as detached and unimpressible. It does not enter into the composition of other things or get coloured by them, being never more nor less than a pure, inward light, averse to change and movement and infinite in the sense that every attempt to define it by a comparison with our specific experiences must mean the ascription of adventitious features.\* For they are very different in character, being always appearances or objects of knowledge, and even so is the empirical ego, which *appears or is felt* to be the pivot round which the whole machinery of thought and conduct revolves.\* So the question arises how these appearances come to be known at all, and how specially this ego irradiates with the light of consciousness though made up of insentient materials. And you only put it off instead of properly answering it when you say that the ego has no existence apart from consciousness, for your answer provokes an enquiry about its *raison d'être* in the face of the assumed exclusiveness of Intelligence.

\* The difference between Intelligence and the ego is indicated with aphoristic brevity in *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, I. 2 and IV. 19.

Do we then light here on a loose end in the speculation of Yoga, on a rent or gap as it were in its synthesis of first principles ? A careful examination of the *Sūtras* themselves shows that the rent exists in the imagination of those who hold that there must be no seams in their abstract thought, though antinomies are unavoidable so long as too much is made of logical distinctions which are based on our use of words. If Intelligence and Nature are so defined as to exhaust the entire field of reality and to exclude one another at the same time, then there remains nothing which may overcome their mutual opposition. But Patañjali says that Intelligence appears like the mind-stuff through out the entire gamut of empirical existence, and reaches an inviolate aloofness only after all mental facts have disappeared. And Vyāsa is even more explicit on this point when he observes that there is surely some affinity between absolute Intelligence and the subtle principle (*buddhi-sattva*) that is operative in revealing things and referring them to a self, though elements that are both unconscious and unstable enter largely in its composition.\* Thus two heterogeneous and independent entities meet in our concrete consciousness which is consequently complex to the point of being almost mysterious. But their disparity is indicative of a possible separation, and to that possibility Yoga pins its hope because the conjunction proves a fruitful source of trouble and disappointment.

#### 14. *The absoluteness of Intelligence, the goal*

But is it wise to leave the broad and beaten path of experience for the quick-sand of what may be a mere metaphysical possibility ? The question cannot be fairly answered without accepting the challenge of Yoga and trying the experiments that it prescribes. It gives you a discipline to live by as well as a doctrine to accept, and it demands no more than the scientist who asks you to test his results by reproducing the conditions under which they were obtained.† The verification may be difficult in the ill-arranged and inadequately equipped laboratory of your

\* See *Sūtra* I. 4 and *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 20 and Swāmi Hariharānanda's notes on them in *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana* and *Bhāṣya*.

† See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, III. 6.



mind. But that can be no excuse for a summary and un-favourable verdict on its accuracy. There is, no doubt, the obvious objection that the Absolute cannot be caught up in formulae or detected by experiments. But all that the yogi contends for is that Intelligence may be separated ultimately from limited states of consciousness as they are not necessary to its existence. There have been other philosophies of the Absolute both in the East and the West, and they may stand comparison with Yoga as interpretations of life. But what is special about the latter is that it ties its trust to certain special experiences and asks you to try and have them for yourself before pronouncing on its merits.

The Absolute is an unfortunate term as it has been used in philosophical and theological controversy in a variety of senses, almost all of which have been mercilessly criticised. But cleared of ambiguity, it is an expressive name for the goal of yogic discipline. Frederic Harrison says that the Absolute cannot be a cause without being "under the condition of preceding its effect."\* But if empirical existence suffers complete dissolution owing to the inactivity of its constituents, Intelligence may attain absoluteness, being no longer conditioned or related. He characterises the Absolute, however, as a negative conception because he understands it to mean absence of relations. But this is to beg a suitable interpretation to justify a fashionable stricture, for the contention is that it is possible and even necessary to get beyond the dead-lock of dualism which we find in phenomenal life. Frederic Harrison denies the possibility and says that his opponents have in view conceptions like consciousness-in-general or potential consciousness, which prove easy targets for his inexorable logic.† But his vigorous onslaught does not affect the position of the yogi who holds that consciousness is an independent principle of revelation and not an entity nor even a necessary relation, so that its disappearance cannot involve the conjoined entities in a common ruin. So we have no justification for concluding that he invests with life and dignity a sort of "vacuous consciousness", obtained by abstracting the common element in all sorts of mental facts

\* *The Philosophy of Common Sense*, p. 132.

† *Ibid.*, p. 139.

from the highest religious experience to the details of animal life.

Some have identified the Absolute with indefinite subliminal consciousness with the scintillations of which we are familiar in the realms of thought and conduct. But while subliminal consciousness receives its dues in the yogi's psychology, it is always traced to some previous experience so that he is very far from claiming transcendence of all conditions for it. And it is to transcendence of conditions that all his efforts are directed. A similar motive appears even in ordinary life, but it is obscured or diverted by the impression that new conditions may prove permanently satisfying. But to the yogi conditions as such are intolerable because they touch upon or refer to what is beyond all of them. This reference, however, has been stoutly denied in modern as well as ancient times by philosophers who were certainly not materialists or agnostics. James Ward says, for example, that the conditioned or relative implies its condition or correlate and not the unconditional, as "father implies child and master implies servant." \* But it cannot be contended that the individuals thus related are nothing but the relations specified along with others that may remain to be noticed. The residuum in every case may be indefinite, indeed; but it is nonetheless real, for without it relatedness is but a fine-spun cobweb hanging on to nothing.

Such is the view-point of the yogi. He focuses his attention on the ulterior significance of experience while the philosophers just referred to are content with exhibiting its internal coherence. The habit of thought is not the same in the two cases and so the issues differ. The yogi finds all forms of conscious life interpenetrated by self-consciousness, and he interprets this central principle as the revelation of a physical or a social self or of a compound of both which poses as the subject or source of consciousness though it is in reality an object which may be observed, watched and even analysed. So he leaves it behind for a subject which can never be an object. But is this "great first cause" to be regarded as unconscious because it lies outside the bounds of consciousness? Yes, if by consciousness is

\* *Essays in Philosophy*, p. 287.

understood personalistic experience or a relation in which subject and object limit each other. But since it is unreasonable to deny consciousness to what is the cause of every partial form of it, he concludes that there must be a consciousness independent of individuality or untainted by the duality of subject and object. And that consciousness he calls unchanging, absolute or unobscured Intelligence.

It is hard, indeed, for the human understanding to form an adequate notion of such a principle, for to form it is to transcend the familiar bounds of our experience. The difficulty is twofold. It requires in the first instance abstraction from the conditions of space and time by which all that we perceive is phenomenally determined. But what is more, it demands also that thought should be conceived as freed from the anchor of individuality to which we find it always fastened in our lives. Hence the attempt appears to be no less than an effort to overleap the conditions of our being for a specular outlook of what is beyond. It is no wonder then that our understanding should totter on the brink of such a conception.

But the yogī frankly recognises the magnitude of the task when he says that constituted as we are at present, we have a vicious tendency to confound the knower with the known and that this confusion is the prolific parent of every other error and imperfection in our lives. He goes, indeed, farther and observes that even after it has been detected by careful analysis, it continues to colour and distort our thoughts and activities so long as speculation is not followed by a sincere resolve to stick to the truth and to sacrifice all for it.\* He would, therefore, dismiss as a fatal concession to human weakness the theory that our idea of the identical self is only a postulate of experience and so can have no meaning or reality beyond it. Nor would he treat with greater consideration the view that it is obtained by

\* An effective discrimination of the knower from the known (*viveka-khyāti*) is declared in *Bhāṣya* I. 2, to be the last reward of the purification of our moral and intellectual nature. And Swāmi Hariharānanda marks it off as superior to the transcendent powers that may be obtained by a discriminating knowledge of the constituents of the phenomenal world.—*Bhāṣvati*, I. 2.

eliminating all that is accidental in concrete experience and that if it is to have any objective validity, that validity must be established on other lines than analysis and abstraction. Absolute Intelligence cannot, indeed, be *verified* within the limits of our empirical existence because it is a condition of consciousness. But all the same we would meet it at every corner of that existence, were we not wrongheaded enough to suppose that to be known, the cause and correlate of consciousness must come into it as a percept or object like its other contents.

Do we not abut, however, on an impenetrable mystery in our effort to understand it, if to understand it is to take stock of the conditions of our existence? It is, no doubt, a mystery to us in our present state. But the mystery is not impenetrable since we may catch glimpses of it at every turn, as phenomenal existence, rightly interpreted, involves a reference to what is beyond. And it is, after all, idle to talk of our inability to lift ourselves out of the stream of experience. We actually perform this miracle when we define it as a stream and take its measure, for we cannot mark out the limits of anything or determine its character in perfect ignorance of what lies outside it.

The expressions used here to bring out the implications of consciousness are suggestive of space-relations and so are apt to mislead unless the limits of analogy are carefully borne in mind. We may say, indeed, with greater justice that the Absolute stands not outside but at the very core of life, which consists of a number of mutable and transitory relations. But it matters little, after all, whether you conceive it as standing within or outside the confines of experience. The point is that unless you are prepared to ignore the radical difference between knowledge and its objects or to assume that these can by permutation and combination give rise to thoughts about themselves, you must admit that it has a free and independent existence, while without it the concrete world of sights and sounds and even thoughts must shrink and lapse into an undistinguished potentiality. This independence or immaculateness is, in fact, stressed by saying that it stands outside the limits of experience, for were it really outside, experience would be impossible. So 'in the operations of the mind alone you may feel its presence and not in mountain

caves or in dense darkness or in the depths of the sea or even in the underworld.\*

Intelligence then is not a mere apotheosis of the abstract unity of thought, and we are in closer touch with reality in occasional and obscure glimpses of it than in any knowledge, however distinct, that we may gain through our senses and faculties. These glimpses give us, it is true, no more than what has been characterised as "the poorest of all ideas". But we have to be content with them, such as they are, till we are able to abjure our present mode of thinking which involves even in its highest reaches the duality of perception. For the mediating consciousness (*buddhi*) is obviously unequal to the comprehension of that which can be neither subject nor object, being necessarily inexpressible in terms of these because all expression is due to it. In fact, this consciousness objectifies it ordinarily by assimilating its unchangeable essence to unstable, shifting and complex modes,† and it is only in rare moments that we have the inadequate and confused knowledge just referred to. The yogī asks us, therefore, to seek a better method for the satisfying insight than the way of experience, which bristles with irrelevant distinctions. There is, no doubt, the apprehension that in renouncing our familiar organ of knowledge with its limiting forms of time and space (*citta*), we may be courting intellectual nothingness instead of rising to a higher spiritual altitude. But he sets down the apprehension as a weakness of the spiritually lame or halt who try to come to rest on the untenable position that Intelligence is a mechanical process which startles us by the novelty or rather disparity of its results. And he holds, on the other hand, that it must be capable of knowing itself, before other things can shine forth in its light, or in other words that self-knowledge (*svābhāsa*) is its essence though that knowledge is generally veiled or distorted by partial manifestations of foreign elements. So he would urge us to shed the excrescences of particular thought and thus reduce the complexity of our nature to

\* Swāmī Hariharānanda offers a happy translation of *anupatati* in *Bhāṣya* IV. 22 as "stands behind". *Puruṣa* does not enter into mental processes. Yet He is in the underlying self-consciousness inasmuch as the empirical ego is a copy of Him.—*Bhāṣya*, IV. 22.

† See *Sūtra*, I. 4 and comments.

that state of unclouded well-being in which Intelligence is one with knowledge.\* For however comprehensive and exact they may be, they can never reveal the Absolute unequivocally. They are, in fact, its “hiding places”, and so they have to be swept aside in order that we may get beyond the imperfect and infrequent visions of it that can never still our unrest.

\*See *Sūtras*, I. 2 & 3 and comments.

## CHAPTER III

### THE MIND

#### 1. *The place of psychology in Yoga*

We examined in the preceding chapter the form of consciousness and the significance of that form as an index of what is static and immutable in the composition of individuals. The present will be devoted to a discussion of its contents, but not with that wealth of detail and profusion of side-light which have made psychology one of the most interesting subjects of study. Nor will the genetic point of view be adopted here, as the purpose is not to exhibit the gradual unrolling of latent powers from their simplest to their most complex manifestations. Psychology occupies, indeed, a prominent place in this system, but it does so for other reasons. The yogī does not believe that the riddle of the universe can be completely read by the analysis of a few logical concepts or even by flawless deductions from certain abstract principles which are treated as finalities. Nothing, it is true, could have been more satisfactory than the discovery of a logical short-cut to the heart of the mystery. But he is fully alive to the circumstance that our concrete personal experiences are not mere accidents and that if they happen to be out of key with his solution, the human intellect cannot be expected to come to rest on it. So he is not prepared to sweep them into the circle of self-consciousness without an examination of their special features. Psychology is, therefore, not a digression in his system, nor even a parenthesis, but a way of approach which opens out an important vista and determines the perspective.

Its position, however, fixes its scope and standpoint in a way that rules out of consideration certain phases of mental life, while it comprehends others that are not yet regarded as fit subjects for scientific investigation. It groups carefully psychic facts of normal human existence and brings out their mutual dependence under ordinary conditions. But it offers no account of divergences from the type under the stress of social and physical surroundings. Nor does it attempt a close comparison

of the fully developed human mind with that of children and of the lower animals in order to trace it to its most elementary form. At the same time, it refers to occult virtues and extraordinary powers that are said to be attainable by a special course of discipline. But both in its inclusions, and omissions, it aims at the confirmation or illustration of the principles discovered in another field of enquiry. The idea underlying this method is, of course, the conviction that the world-old doubts which lie at the root of all philosophy cannot be settled out of hand by the general conclusions obtained by a preliminary survey of the nature and conditions of consciousness and that, even when they are correct, certitude can be claimed for them only after they have been brought into accord with a wide variety of facts. The most striking illustration of this method will be found in the next chapter. But here too we discover a clear recognition of the bearing of psychological theory on philosophical speculation. Hence the import of the following exposition will be missed if it is taken to be a string of arid and dogmatic statements connected loosely, if at all, with the central conception. They form, in strict truth, an important avenue to that conception or, looked at from the other side, they are as it were so many corollaries which serve to test its validity by an appeal to observation.

There are other reasons for the important place assigned to psychology in this system. Yoga advances beyond a purely speculative attitude to lay down a way of life marked by stages that correspond to differences in aptitude and outlook, more specifically, it enunciates with scrupulous exactitude rules for the government of thought and feeling and for the development of a distinct kind of insight. It recognises also the possibility of attaining extraordinary powers and transcendent knowledge by a methodical training of the intellect and the will. And lastly, it stresses the part played by latent impressions in the drama of man's bondage and struggle for freedom. So psychology and ethics are basal sciences for it, and it devotes special attention to the analysis of mental facts and their classification.

## 2. *Classification of facts of consciousness*

Facts of consciousness are in the first instance classified as knowledge of realities (*pramāṇa*), erroneous notions (*viparyaya*),



ideas corresponding to expressions which do not denote realities but are helpful in their comprehensions (*vikalpa*), memory or replica of past experiences (*smṛti*) and the dim awareness that accompanies dreamless sleep (*nidrā*). An obvious criticism of this general survey is that it lays exclusive stress on perceptive and cognitive aspects and seems to regard mental life as no more than a series of intellectual units. We are told, indeed, that there can be no form of cognition without a feeling tone. But the place thus assigned to feelings indicates that they are secondary phenomena and, if not exactly superadded elements, yet rather of the nature of attributes than of substantive states.\* This appears strange in view of the overshadowing influence on life ascribed to them in their native hue as pains and their specious disguise as pleasures. An explanation of this anomalous intellectualism is to be found, however, in the guiding principle of the enquiry. The object of the Yogī is to mark off those forms of consciousness which, when inhibited, put an end to our infinitely varied experience. He knows well enough that emotion fills large spaces on the canvas of life. And he would readily admit that it attains often an intensity and importance that would stultify the attempt to treat it as always subordinate to cognition. Nevertheless he is on strong ground when he thinks that it must disappear with the disappearance of its presentation-base, since to this it owes its vitality and definiteness of form.†

Similar reasons may be given for the otherwise inexplicable absence of conation from the list. Its consequences, proximate and remote, are said to perpetuate the series of sufferings which is mis-called life.\*\* But it always starts with some idea, correct or erroneous, of the fitness of things and collapses as soon as this idea is suppressed. So the Yogī is justified in leaving it out of account on the ground that it does not call for separate treatment. He discovers thus a presentation element in every form of psychosis, and to that he directs attention for the

\* See *Sūtra* I. 5 and comments.

† This is how the classification is justified by Vijñāna-Bhikṣu in his *Yogasāra-Saṅgraha*, Part I, where he says that desires and activities are inhibited by the inhibition of their presentation-contents in one or other of the five forms just mentioned.

\*\* See *Sūtras* II, 12 and IV. 7 and comments.

purpose of his enquiry. But he holds at the same time that every presentation changes from moment to moment in intensity if not in other ways, so that there is an interplay of activity (*pravṛtti*) and expression (*prakāśa*) in every form of consciousness. But expression remains the dominant feature throughout, so that the principle to which it is due or the power of expressing (*sattva*) is regarded as the chief constituent of the mind.

### 3. Perception

The things expressed or revealed are objects and events outside and modifications of our mental and physical equipment. Our knowledge of external realities is derived primarily from perception (*pratyakṣa*) which is made up of simpler data generally known as sensations. It is questionable, indeed, whether pure sensations figure at all in our lives. But objective changes as they break in upon the budding mind of the infant are probably translated into them as are also impressions received by men whose capacity for complex psychosis has been temporarily dulled by narcotics.\* Ideal analysis enables us at any rate to discriminate them as separable parts of our concrete experience. And this analysis is pushed further by the Yogī who finds in them syntheses of dim psychical phenomena which are just below the threshold of ordinary consciousness. These elemental facts are punctuated by time and time alone, and they correspond in variety to the five special senses, so that all the diversity that we notice among sensations of a particular class is due to difference in the number of like elements that enter into their composition. Between the sensations of yellow and blue, there is, therefore, not a qualitative difference, not a difference of modality, but one of massiveness. And this is not a mere

\* Swāmī Hariharānanda says that the first thing in consciousness is undefined sensation or *ālocana*. It is such information as comes through a single sense without the co-operation of memory and higher faculties. Certain verses taken by him from Vācaspati Miśra's *Tattvakaumudī*, 27, where they occur as a quotation, compare it to the undifferentiated feelings caused by anaesthetics. They state also that perception (*pratyakṣa*) is a later stage in mental life and that it consists in classifying and otherwise determining as an object what is obtained by *ālocana*—*Sāṃkhya-Tattvāloka*, Section 28.

hypothesis with the Yogī, for he is able to perceive the presentation units in their primitive simplicity in the same way as we perceive various kinds of light or colour or sound.

But it is otherwise with the obtuse sensibility of undisciplined minds, which cannot go beyond sensations. Sensations are, therefore, elemental facts for them, elemental suchnesses, that is, with, however a specific local and temporal accent, the new feature of spreadoutness being due to their inability to follow the inconceivably rapid succession of homogeneous units and the consequent readiness to interpret it as co-existence. Yet the compositeness of sensations is unlike that of percepts in which the sense-impression of the moment is backed up by recollection of past impressions and the complex thus formed is classed with similar complexes and differentiated from others. This process is generally instantaneous, as when certain jarring notes are recognised at once as the croaking of the raven or the bright red of a rose recalls its odour and feel. But an appreciable time is taken to complete it when, for instance, I notice after dusk a dark and moving thing in a corner of my room and identify it afterwards as the domestic cat in quest of prey.\*

The objective reference in perceptions is stressed in this system quite as much as their complexity. They are initiated by disturbances outside the body which set up certain forms of activity within it and so come to be reflected by the mind in its own way. Moreover the resulting image is always cognised as an object which exists independently of the act of cognition.† The two may be more or less unlike and, as a matter of fact, they differ at least in the circumstance that temporal relation among the original movements is translated into one of co-existence in the psychical transcript. But this is a matter for philosophers, and it cannot in any case stultify the universal conviction that in all

\* See *Pātañjala-Yoga Darśana*, I. 7 and *Sāṃkhya-Sūtra*, II. 32.

† Vācaspati Miśra carefully analyses the expressions in *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, I. 7, in order to bring out the nature and significance of perception. He says that the word *arthasya* repudiates the notion that the percept does not stand for a reality, that *Bāhyavastūparāgād* meets the doctrine that the reality is not external by asserting that the mental image is due to something outside, and that *indriyaprapñālikayā* points out that the higher faculties involved in perception get related to the object through the senses—*Tattva-Vaiśaraḍi*, I. 7.

appearance there is something real which appears. For even when the perception is found to be incorrect, it is set down not as a phantasy but as an imperfect rendering of what is actual. So there is no warrant in experience for assuming that our perceptions are mere creations of the mind.

They contain, it is true, elements that could not have come then and there from outside. For in every fully developed percept there are in addition to the direct and immediate testimony of the senses, representations and abstract notions that form a sort of marginal background for it. But whatever the contributions of the mind may be, they cannot impeach the ulterior significance of perceptions. We have objects in them, and objects are not mere sensibilities or notions or even combinations of these. Percepts are, in other words, apprehensions of properties linked together as distinct things in the world outside, for it is thus that the mind invariably receives them. So the line is broad enough between phantasies and these objects of knowledge. At the same time there is nothing in our knowledge of them which may be taken as proving that they are held together by imperceptible bonds. They are cases of coherence of cognisable attributes and not of their inherence in incognisable "substances".

There is considerable divergence of opinion on the nature of these external counterparts of percepts. Generic properties compose them, according to some, their specific diversities being regarded as due to differences in setting and in the occasion of their apprehension. Others hold that each of them is different from the rest, being made up of qualities that are peculiar to itself. Others, again, are inclined to think that generic and specific attributes coexist in entities that are always outside our ken, being revealed only through them. But Yoga maintains that the qualities, generic and particular, constitute the objects, which are, however, so imaged on the mind-stuff in perception as to give prominence to the qualities that are particular.\*

The next question is how such images come to be transfigured into facts of consciousness. There is all the difference in the world between a picture and our knowledge of it, and in tracing

\* See *Tattva-Vaisārādī*, I. 7.

the connection between the external movement and the internal modification, we do not get beyond the picture. The answer of the Yogī to this knotty problem has been already given. He holds that the mind is so constituted as to receive impressions from outside and so sensitive at the same time to the light of Intelligence as to suffer a remarkable transformation while exposed to it. In postulating the double line of influence, he stresses, of course, the mystery that there is in perception, where consciousness, which is *sui generis*, appears closely related to certain mechanical processes. But even this is better than a specious explanation, and we need not quarrel with his expression or set it down as a crude metaphor so long as we have no better ideas to offer on the subject.† So far as he can see, this union of apparently “irreconcilable opposites” is a primary fact, and in his opinion it is mere speculative perversity to refuse to accept it as such when it does not admit of subsumption under a more comprehensive principle.

The subject and the object as well as the relation between them are given explicitly in an act of perception according to a celebrated commentator on the *sūtras*.\* But when I see a pitcher before me, the cognition is only of the shape and colour and utility of a well-known article, though if I continue to look at it, the same cognition may develop into a form which is expressed by the proposition, “I am perceiving a pitcher”. Here all the elements are clearly discriminated, but only because there is reflection on the original act of observation. At the same time they must have been present in some way at the very outset, as

† It must be admitted, however, that the attempts of commentators to clear up the point by means of similitudes have added to the difficulty. And against such attempts is the incisive logic of Kamalaśīla directed. If, says he, the image of objects in the mirror-like mind requires to be reflected in the other mirror of Intelligence to become experience, then the second mirror certainly undergoes mutation. If, on the other hand, the second image is outside Intelligence, then it is not clear why Intelligence should be regarded as the experient (*bhoktā*). See *Pañjikā*, *Ātma-Parikṣā*, verse 298. But Intelligence is called the experient in Sāṃkhya and Yoga because it is the condition of experience (*bhoga*) and not because it actually experiences and thus undergoes mutation.

\* This is Vijñāna-Bhikṣu. For a fuller discussion of his statement, see *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*, I. 7.

otherwise reflection could not have got them. The idea of the pitcher is, therefore, a specific transformation of the mind-stuff to match the reality that is outside. But in that transformation there is a reference, however vague, to the recipient of experience and consequently to the knower. Nevertheless, it would be too much to say that all the elements are given explicitly in it. Perception is, above all, the intuition of a thing, and the very clearness of that intuition obscures whatever is presupposed in it.

#### 4. *Inference*

The materials furnished by perception are utilised for increasing the stock of information by the process known as inference, which is, therefore, the next important source of our knowledge of realities. It falls within the province of logic to discuss and classify the relations on which it is based.\* And so all that need be attempted here is to show that in spite of considerable dissimilarity it illustrates like perception that duality of subject and object which we found to belong to the essence of self-consciousness. The two processes are unlike in the circumstance that the knowledge derived from inference is more or less general in character, while perception gives us particular things with all their wealth of detail and colouring. So there is a certain measure of remoteness and abstraction in the former which contrasts with the close intimacy with facts exhibited by the latter. We seem, indeed, to be cognisant of a concrete reality in the form of an individual when we infer from the data before us that Hari is a pious man. But in an inference like this our idea of the individual has not that distinctness and intensity which belong to a percept. This is inevitable, as all but the most elementary inference is supported and guided throughout by speech, which can never give us the fulness, freshness and

\* *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* gives the following example of inference, which appears to combine deduction with the joint method of agreement and difference. The heavenly bodies are seen at different times in different parts of the sky. Chaitra and others (human beings) have been seen in different places at different times, and they are known to possess the power of locomotion. The Vindhya ranges, on the other hand, have never been known to change their position, and they do not possess the power of locomotion. It follows that the heavenly bodies have the power of locomotion. Inference of this type is known as *Sāmānyatodrṣṭa*.

precision of detail which are features of a percept. Still the comparative vagueness of inference cannot invalidate its claim to be regarded as a source of knowledge of objective reality. But it may be urged that we do not get even vague glimpses of the reality in negative conclusions. The absence, however, of a thing amounts to the presence of something other than itself, and it is thus that the mind interprets negative propositions, for there can be no comprehension of what does not exist in any form.

The reference to the cogniser is more indirect in inference than it is in perception. But it is there all the same. The process, appears, indeed to be the successive apprehension of certain relations that are linked together by logical necessities, and the relations are between objects of knowledge which seem to occupy the field of consciousness so completely as to leave no room for the apprehension of their relation to the subject. But if I ask you who is responsible for your conclusion, you do not fasten the responsibility on a psychical substance and much less on the relations in the premises. Your answer is definite and it brooks no challenge because the cogniser in you has been present throughout. It has been certainly very much in the background, more so than in perception. But that is easily explained by reference to the greater complexity of the process.

### 5. *Verbal communication*

A third source of knowledge of reality is verbal communication of a certain kind. We owe much to such communication from friends, relatives and teachers; but we seldom feel that we are exonerated from the duty of bringing their statements into accord with facts or of reconciling their views if they happen to be divergent. And even when we take their findings on trust, we do so because we infer from their general trustworthiness and their relation to us that they cannot mislead. So information received from them has to be classed with inference. The same may be said of authority and tradition as sources of knowledge. We accept the teachings of the Scriptures because we have persuaded ourselves that their authors had the clearest vision of the reality; and if for any reason that conviction is weakened,

we recognise at once that reliance on authority is a precarious method of extending our knowledge. But there are men (*āptas*) whom we cannot choose but believe when they are communicating to us what they have inferred or directly perceived. They may hold no testimonials of credibility. We may be ignorant of their attainments. And yet when they are speaking, the idea of sifting their evidence appears to be revolting. We are entirely at their mercy; our reason abjures its right to guide itself and submits to theirs because it cannot help doing so. We feel that there is a strange power in their words which they exert to plant their convictions in our minds through the medium of speech. Written words can never have this compelling force, nor is it to be traced to clarity of presentation or richness of setting of their ideas. They may even mislead us if their observation has been wrong or their argument defective. But when these defects are absent, their utterances are an independent source of knowledge.\*

The list is now complete of the operations to which we owe our knowledge of the world outside us. They are sensation, perception, inference and verbal communication of the character just mentioned. In sensation we get information through a single sense organ of a quality with a vague spatial setting which means no more than externality. In perception this knowledge is supplemented by contributions from higher faculties and appears in consequence as that of a thing or group of qualities with a more elaborate and definite background of space. In both the relation is with that alone which is immediately present to our senses.

Inference and verbal communication are, on the other hand, wider in scope though less complete in detail. The information that they furnish is not limited to the present or the proximate, expressed as it is in conceptual shorthands in the form of words. But in all of them there is a pronounced objective reference as also a subjective implication which is detected by ideal analysis.

\* Vācaspati Miśra says that the genuine *āpta* possesses faculties improved by exercise, has insight into the various forms of reality and is moved by compassion for inferior creatures—*Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, I. 7.



### 6. *Recollection*

There are two other processes which are helpful in the acquisition of knowledge though they yield no new information by themselves. One of them is recollection or ideal revival of previous experience. It has to be distinguished from phantasy and imagination, which involve transformation of the replicas and from the unsifted representative elements that enter in the make-up of preceptions. So we should define it as reinstatement of a past experience in the form and manner in which it originally came, attended by the conviction that it is a reinstatement or that we have already known it.\* The subjective implication is, therefore, clearer in recollection than in presentation or in inference. The question has been raised whether we remember things and events or the processes by which they were cognised. But since we could not have the objects, without the processes both are recalled, though the emphasis is certainly on the objects.†

### 7. *Abstract notions*

The other process is connected with the use of certain terms for expository convenience or for the proper comprehension of complex relations in spite of the fact that they do not stand for realities. Language abounds in them because of this twofold utility, and they cannot be dispensed with so long as our mode of thinking remains unchanged. Vague ideas not altogether unrelated to actualities answer to these terms, and so they are freely employed in the discussion of things that are remote from concrete experience. It is a rough and ready method of approximating to the truth, a second-rate makeshift which we have recourse to for lack of something better. But the Yogī avoids it because his object is utmost clearness and exactitude of thought, though in imparting his convictions and discoveries to others he is often under the necessity of using such terms. Infinitude is one of them; we know finite things, and from our experience of these we try to conceive what

\* The difference is brought out by a single word (*asampramoṣa*) in *Sūtra* I. 11, which defines memory as reproduction of a previous experience without stealing from anything else.

† See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* and *Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, I. 7.

transcendence of finitude may be like. Time as a receptacle for past, present and future events is another; the past and the future do not exist at this moment, and so the abstract conception of time is a fiction though it is useful in many ways. The same may be said of our notion of space as holding all that exists, for if it is divested of its contents, it must disappear along with them. They are empty (*vastu-śūnya*) conceptions and such are also those which answer to negative terms. Yet we use such terms largely because they denote useful unrealities.\*

Error and truth figure in our ideas of our environment in proportions that reflect no credit on our intelligence and honesty. But the reflection does not concern us at present, and in taking stock of our mental equipment we have to note the errors as well. They consist in believing things to be other than what they really are. The processes which land us in them are similar to those that conduct us to truth. So no separate faculty is needed for entertaining them. They have their origin in defect of observation which may be due to imperfection of sense-organs or in defect of reasoning as when prejudice or passion loads the evidence for us. But these deflections do not take away from them the twofold reference to the object of experience and the recipient of it that we found in truth.

#### 8. *Conation*

We have been discussing so far the ways in which external forces determine our intellectual activities. But we control those forces too to a greater or less extent, and this control is attended by a fresh set of experiences. In fact, the main stream of

\* Even grammatical inflections sometimes start the process. A good example is given by Bhojarāja in *Rājamārttaṇḍa*, I. 9. When we speak of the knower's Intelligence, we suggest that the knower may be thought of apart from his Intelligence, just as when we say Devadatta's blanket we would have it understood that Devadatta is different from it. So the genitive case-ending is slightly misleading in the first case, the knower being Intelligence and nothing more than that. In fact, *vikalpa* is enshrined in the analytical structure of language and is, therefore, more common than is generally supposed. The subject is fully discussed in Swāmī Hariharānanda's *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana* and some of his other works. Professor Radhakrishnan's translation of *vikalpa* as "imagination" fails to bring out the nature and significance of the process.

consciousness is a continuous record of this interplay of the external and the internal through stimulation, adjustment and response. Leaving aside automatic and reflex movements as not sufficiently characteristic of adult human life, we may say that this response starts with a mental rehearsal of a certain kind of activity which is appropriated by the ego or of which the latter conceives itself as the agent in due course for a fitting development of its nature (*samkalpa*). This is followed by an effort or felt outflow of energy from the same ego to the proper motor apparatus (*kṛti*). The feeling may be slight and transient; it may be obscured by more pronounced experiences; but it must be there to complete the process. Next come certain bodily movements resulting in an appropriate modification of the environment. Thus voluntary movement is an expression of the power which the self-conscious mind has not only of planning for the future but, also of influencing the vital energy and the sense-organs which have to be called into play for translating the contemplated improvement into a reality.

In conation the consciousness of the self is more pronounced than in cognition. It is I who resolve and I know that I can convert this resolution into a perceptible fact. The accent of the subject is, therefore, strong in it, though the object also is present throughout, first as the representation of the desired movement and then as that representation filled out and embodied in reality. There is, in other words, a shifting of accent though the terms remain what they were in cognition. We notice again a similar relation between them in constructive imagination (*kalpana*) or the ideal combination of objects which have been perceived separately, as in the conception of a golden mountain. And it is found also in doubt and indecision in which the mind passes to and fro between a number of represented alternatives. The consciousness of the self as independent and active is particularly clear in these cases, the uncomfortable feeling about them being due to the conviction that this activity is futile.\*

\*This analysis of voluntary activity and allied processes is based on Section 35 of Swāmi Hariharānanda's *Sāṃkhya-Tatvāloka*. And he quotes certain passages to show that he has high authority for his statements. They may be translated as follows. 'Cognition is followed by desire, desire by effort, effort by activity in the sense-organs and this by

A number of important truths emerge out of the foregoing analysis of conation. The first is that it is not simply a desire or even a resultant of desires but a manifestation of the empirical ego as active for the attainment of what it considers to be desirable. The second is that bodily movement is not essential to conation, though there is a tendency in a certain class of ideas to act themselves out after they have reached a certain measure of intensity. And the last is that the relation between the will to move and the consequent neuro-muscular activity is not less of an enigma, not more comprehensible than the assertion of the yogī that movements may take place outside the organism as direct and immediate effects of decisions on the part of men who have trained their wills for the purpose. It is true that under what we regard as normal conditions, conation is followed in the first instance by activity within the organism. But 'abnormal' phenomena do sometimes occur, as when the motor apparatus refuses to act in spite of earnest solicitations of the will. And so there is no reason for discrediting the statement of the yogī, specially when there are facts in the field which admit of no other explanation.

#### 9. *Subjective experiences*

We come next to what have been called subjective experiences in modern psychology because their interest lies mainly in the light that they shed on the condition of the subject. The phrase is not quite exact for, as we shall presently see, even these experiences are of objects which in being experienced are marked off from their recipient, though owing to their proximity to it they are able to prefer an easily recognised claim to be classed apart. But it leaves us very much in the dark about their nature. So instead of troubling about the propriety of the name, we shall proceed at once to describe them and thus avoid any confusion that may result from its ambiguity.

Pleasure (*sukha*), pain (*duḥkha*) and stupor (*moha*) are among these experiences, and they are closely related to percepts and

perceptible movement'. 'It is the effort in the mind that breathes life into or causes movement in the body'. 'The activity in the sense-organs (neuro-muscular activity) is like life and certain other things a function of the mind, though this is not clearly perceived'.

ideas. There is, in fact, no cognition without a shade of any of these, while they in their turn never appear independently or apart from a presentative base. So there is some excuse for regarding them as thoughts with a peculiar interest that arrests attention. But thoughts and their affective tones are distinct though inseparable phases of our mental life, and the distinction does not disappear even in their simplest forms. For while sensations are received through organs that are in contact with external forces, an inner sense takes cognisance of pleasure, pain and stupor.\* It is possible, no doubt, to class them together by so defining sensation as to include besides the psychoses initiated by external stimuli those others that are directly related to changes within the system. And there is an obvious advantage in such a classification as it stresses the important fact that feelings like cognitions exhibit the duality of experience. They enter, it is true, more readily and intimately into the texture of our existence than thoughts and images. And they are easily distinguished from sense-impressions and percepts in which the objective reference is the leading factor. Still they are cognised as *objects* by the ego like sound or light or odour. So in spite of the fact that their relation to it is very close, that relation is never one of identity. In feeling that I am happy or miserable, I do not confuse myself with the happiness or misery, but contemplate them as conditions which I happen to be in, as objects, therefore, which are different from myself, though they interest me particularly.

This special and private interest makes them at the same time subjective experiences *par excellence*. Our thoughts relate directly or indirectly to a world which we perceive along with others. So our attitude is markedly 'objective' in intellectual activity. But the case is otherwise in the affective phase of our mental life, for our pleasures and pains are entirely our own and never matters of common cognition. And this sense of private ownership serves to accentuate better than in cognition the reference to the recipient of experience. For instance, my feeling of happiness passes more easily, naturally and frequently into a judgment like 'I experience the happiness' than does my perce-

\* See *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*, I. 7 where it is said that certain forms of subjective experience are called inner perceptions in Yoga.

ption of a concrete external object into the corresponding judgment, 'I see it'.

What is here said of pleasure, pain and stupor is true of every variety of affective phenomena, and the yogī is, in fact, right in regarding his tripartite division as exhaustive. For the most complex emotions are but modifications of these and are marked off from their originals only by differences of intensity or duration or of the cognitive elements to which they are attached. So an analysis of the three types is sufficient for exhibiting their character. But these three have to be accepted as ultimate facts as they cannot be resolved into one another or into anything more primary than they. Besides, the dissimilarity between them is matched by the dissimilarity of the conditions under which they make their appearance. Pleasure, for instance, is in evidence when the cognitive factor (*satva*) is clear and distinct and the concomitant activity (*rajomala*) is slight in comparison with it. But pain ensues if there is considerable effort or activity attended by indistinct cognition. And we have stupor when both the presentative and active factors of a complex psychosis are at their lowest ebb.\*

Again, since the presentative element is of the first importance in the texture of our being, another way of envisaging affective states is to say that pleasure is the effect and index of health and vigour of intellect and pain of its impaired vitality while stupor indicates that the intellect has been temporarily paralysed or put out of action by an excessive strain on it. Or in other words we experience pleasure when our sensations or thoughts run easily, pain when this smooth flow is ruffled by incongruity or hindrance, and stupor when a sudden and violent shock completely dislocates the series. And since the current of presentations is either placid or agitated or confused, it is never absolutely colourless as regards feeling though ordinarily the tint is so subdued as to escape notice.

As feeling is not less universal than cognition and has, moreover, a warmth and intimacy that no objective experience can boast of, certain writers on Yoga have regarded it as the stuff of the mind. We do, indeed, detach our joys and sorrows from

\* Swāmi Hariharānanda says that it is induced by excessive pleasure or pain and is injurious to the system—*Sāṃkhya-Tattvāloka*, Section 37.

our knowledge of the object-world and assign them to the inner world of the self. And life itself is of interest because of them, knowledge being sought as far as they prompt us to. But objects too are valid primarily as means to happiness or to freedom from misery and confusion, being either pleasurable or painful or stupefying. Hence pleasure, pain and stupor have been regarded by the writers in question as the constituents of the external world as well. The theory, however, carries its own refutation when set forth in this extreme form. Pleasure, pain and stupor are, no doubt, apprehended, and we get them too from things outside us. They cannot, however, be regarded as immediate materials of these like colour and sound and taste. Similarly, the immediate materials of the mind are knowledge and activity and retentiveness or conservation in comparative obscurity of what has been already known or achieved.

The subjective experiences that accompany volition are desire, aversion and that irrepressible longing for self-preservation which takes the reins when the capacity for thought collapses in the presence of a great and unexpected danger. They are counterparts of the original feelings in practical life or, to put it more clearly, they are the same feelings supplemented by what is required of cognitive and conative elements to convert them into precursors of movements.

Desire (*rāga*), for instance, is striving towards what has been previously known as pleasurable while aversion (*dveṣa*) is striving away from what has previously caused pain. Thus a representative element with a prominent feeling-tone furnishes the motive force in both. But in the third (*abhiniveśa*) a vague yet overpowering sense of trouble takes the place of the representative factor, so that it is more in the nature of an impulse with a biological end than a clearly recognised purpose.\* But the yogī considers it to be reminiscent of experiences in previous lives, and he refers in support of this view to the circumstance that it is generally attended by a peculiar and energetic stir

\* Swāmī Hariharānanda points out that *abhiniveśa* is, according to *sūtra* II. 9 any natural and spontaneous effort, any instinctive impulse that does not wait for the lead of anticipated pleasure or pain and is to be found even among those who are wise and learned. So the shrinking from death, to which *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* alludes, is only the most striking example of it. See *Sāmkhya-Tattvāloka*, Section 38, foot-note.

throughout the system which is not altogether out of key with the needs of the occasion.

As all our activities are due to the longing to realise an anticipated pleasure or to be rid of an anticipated trouble or pain or to ward off a danger too great to permit clearness of comprehension, it follows that they are never without one or another of these subjective experiences. And as these experiences are but developments of feeling, the subjective and objective implications are present in them, though owing to their dynamic character the centre of gravity shifts still more distinctly towards the self. The objects here are, of course, the representative elements ; but instead of being cognised as faded fragments of a more or less distant past, they are felt to be closely related to our present and future well-being. So they are immediately pleasurable or painful or staggering and, what is more, they inspire movements towards new situations or experiences for the self.

We come now to the last set of subjective experiences, which are in a sense the most general and fundamental as furnishing the ground for the infinite variety of presentations and activities that make up our existence. They are the sense of being awake, of dreaming and of being asleep. The first two require no characterisation. But sleep is often regarded as the negation of consciousness. On waking up, however, we remember that we have slept and are often able to define the quality as profound, light or disturbed. And there cannot be this memory of a previous state unless it has been attended by consciousness of some sort. This consciousness is, of course, of the restfulness or inactivity of the senses and higher faculties and is, therefore, in marked contrast with that of waking, when all of them are active or ready for activity. But repose may be experienced as well as all-round movement. Intermediate between the two is the experience of being in a dream in which the senses cease to respond to stimuli and so the higher faculties carry on their work without the usual controls.

The nature of sleep has been discussed at some length by writers on Yoga, because the current view that it is a temporary suspension of consciousness runs counter to the yogic doctrine that there can be no appreciable gaps in the stream



of consciousness so long as the mind is in evidence. It has been contended, indeed, that the mind ceases to exist in profound sleep and yogic 'trance', which are thus equated. But there is the recalcitrant fact that even profound sleep leaves some recollection behind, which it cannot do if it is a psychical void. This recollection is, no doubt, shadowy and fleeting; but it cannot be otherwise from the character of the psychical content recalled. In sleep the principle of conservation predominates over the rival principles of cognition and activity, as the result of which the senses and the higher faculties are lulled to rest. And it is the sense of this general rest that forms its psychical content. Rest, however, is seldom apprehended with that distinctness which belongs to the perception of subjective activity or objective existence, and so sleep appears much like a blank interim. Yogic 'trance' is at any rate very different in nature and is induced not by encouraging sleep or torpor but by unremitting culture of the intellect and the will.

What has been said about the implications in other forms of experience applies *mutatis mutandis* to these. The object of cognition in each of them is the general state of the psychical apparatus. This apparatus, however, is owned and its states are of interest only as determining the attitude or experience of its owner. For when questioned about them, his reply is that he has been awake or has been dreaming and not that his mind has been awake or certain higher faculties have been at work. The self is, therefore, the invariable centre of reference, and the heightened or lowered vitality implied in these states is almost instinctively felt as belonging to it.

#### 10. *Consciousness inseparable from activity*

The foregoing is an analysis of the different phases of experience after Yoga, and the line of investigation has conducted us to the result that the duality of subject and object, a duality implied where it is not explicit is to be found in all of them. This is otherwise expressed by saying that every fact of consciousness is a relation, a bringing together of dissimilar elements. The mind is, therefore, conceived as a highly active and synthetic principle, which builds up the superstructure of experience by arranging materials obtained from within and

without in a pattern of its own. But this primacy appears to be denied to it in the statement that things are known because they get themselves reflected in its glassy essence. How then are we to reconcile these apparently conflicting views? Is not Yoga perilously near the fair copy theory when it characterises knowledge as a reproduction in the mind of what is beyond it?\*

In its extreme form, this theory represents the mind as a sensitive plate which receives and retains impressions from outside and simulates independence or originality by letting new impressions overlap and thus complicate old traces, so that the resulting compounds appear like special formations of its own. And this explanation is extended sometimes to processes other than cognition. Feeling presents no serious difficulty because it is a tone or a colouring of a cognitive base, and the mind appears at any rate to be passive in it. And the other subjective experiences are made out to be rarefied varieties of presentation in which, as in so many atmospheres of comparative tenuity the well-marked forms of consciousness have their being. So conation alone seems to be recalcitrant; and even conation, it is contended, illustrates the passivity of the mind in no small measure inasmuch as its initial stage is an image more or less modified of a previous experience, while its completion is but the filling out and intensification of that image in the shape of a reality.

Yoga, however, is far enough from accepting such a position. It admits, indeed, that our knowledge of what is outside is derived exclusively from images of it in the mind. But it holds at the same time that these images are formed and elaborated only because the self is active throughout the process. This truth is disguised from us because our usual attitude is objective, so that in attending to what is apprehended we lose sight of the manner of apprehending it. But the fact remains that a vague self-consciousness is present even where the thought or feeling of the moment appears to engross attention and that

\* Bhojarāja characterises the mind as the endless spectacle of the world so represented as to appear composed of pleasure, pain and stupor.—*Rāja-mārtaṇḍa*, II. 17. Vijñāna-Bhikṣu says that self-consciousness alone is the object-for-experience, other things becoming such only when mounted on it.—*Yoga-Vārtika* II. 20.

it gains in distinctness as interest in the thought or feeling declines. So there is a common factor in the infinite variety of experience. And by that common factor, again, are all its details closely and subtly woven into a continuity. Yoga concludes, therefore, that it is a fundamental and active principle and defines consciousness as the self's awareness of itself and of objects too, but only because and in so far as they are appropriated by it.

#### 11. *The senses*

In fact, different lines of enquiry converge in the direction of this conclusion. An analysis, for instance, of sensation into its moments serves to illustrate it. The popular idea is that the mind is passive while receiving impressions from without, that information pours in through the different senses and is only subsequently taken up and elaborated by the higher faculties. But the truth is that the intellect is even in its lowest operations actively cognisant of the external forces that knock at its doors, so that the difference between sense and understanding is not really the contrast between receptivity and activity. The yogī makes his position clear on this point by saying that fools only identify the senses with the sense organs and that the impressions said to be received through the latter are in reality the mind's ways of reproducing what is outside it.\* The process is, according to him, a modification of self-consciousness caused by external stimuli, so that what is at first a revelation of the ego becomes in keeping with the nature of the external disturbance a revelation of the ego as the knower of this or that phenomenon. It is, as he says, like the transformation of white light in passing through a coloured medium, and the comparison has a special appropriateness in the circumstance that the ego seems to lose itself in the sensation when the latter is particularly obtrusive. But the salient fact is that the energy concentrated in self-consciousness passes beyond its proper limits to certain portions of the body, which are thereby identified with the self, as in

\* See *Sāṃkhya-Sūtra*, II. 24 where it is said that the senses cannot be perceived like external objects.

judgments like 'I hear the sound or see the colour'. Or rather the energy is always there ready to respond to calls from outside, as is evidenced by the fact that the organs which receive these calls retain their functional tone even when there is no external stimulation. This energy it is that builds up the organs in question to establish the richest intimacy with the world of concrete realities, and in working those organs it figures as the different senses. But as already observed, it is in the last resort the energy of self-consciousness which differentiates and diversifies itself for a growing fulness of existence. So it comes about that in sensation the dividing line between the subject and the object is 'drawn at the surface of the skin'. When questioned on the subject, I have no hesitation in saying that I possess the sight or hearing, and the reply shows that there is a very close connection between myself and the energy that develops into the senses.

They have been studied in this system from various stand-points, of which three only need be noticed here. They are in the first instance modes of receiving impressions on the sense-organs by movements beyond them. Secondly, they are specific forms of consciousness to match the diversity that exists outside. The mind-stuff thus exhibits its latent powers by taking sharply discriminated forms in keeping with that variety. And thirdly, they are manifestations of the self which acts, moreover, as a centre of reference for integrating sensations which often differ widely in character and genesis.\*

The cognitive senses have been alluded to so far because they are supposed to furnish incontrovertible evidence of the passivity of the mind or rather of its complete dependence on an external world which appeals to us primarily through experiences of sound, temperature, light, taste and smell. Pre-eminence among them is assigned in this system to the sense of hearing for a number of reasons. Sounds are more sharply discriminated both as regards quality and quantity than are other sense-impressions. They reach us from every quarter, so that the relative position of the sense-organ is a matter of no moment. And by their variety and distinctness they enable us to have access to the thoughts and sentiments of others through

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, III. 47 and comments on it.

the medium of articulate speech. The olfactory sense is lowest in the scale, because its information is vague and the sense-organ concerned is affected by solid particles which are the grossest of external objects. But all of them may be so trained as to give us not merely sensations but also those finer psychic elements of which sensations are made.\*

Voluntary movement is the function common to all the active senses, and this movement is either of the body as a whole or of portions of it. The self appears as the prime determinant in every case, while the movement or the object attained by it is felt to be conducive to its interest. So the senses are differentiated from one another by the purpose that they serve and the part of the system that they set in motion. In speaking, for instance, the physical apparatus involved consists of certain nerves and muscles in the chest, throat, tongue and the lips. In locomotion nerves and muscles in the legs are called into play, though sometimes it is performed with the aid of the hands. The latter, however, and the mouth as well are mainly employed in carrying things to places where they are likely to be useful.† We get thus three different senses, and to these have to be added the sense which is connected with reproduction and that which brings about the elimination of waste matter from the body. But here too the senses are not the sense organs but different modes of the activity of the self which are testified to by a general feeling of innervation and special feelings of change in the organs brought into play.

So the distinction between the cognitive and the active senses turns upon a difference of emphasis on receptivity and movement, there being a blend of both in either set. When you see anything, there is activity in focussing your attention on the appropriate stimulus as also in certain physiological adjustments that may be required for the purpose. When, again, you

\* The order of precedence among special sensations differs from what it is in modern psychology. It is sound, temperature, sight, taste and smell. But a more important difference is that feelings of contact and pressure are not classed as skin-sensations, being attributed to the activity of the vital energy and the organs of locomotion.

† The technical name for activity of this kind is *śilpa*. See *Sāṃkhya-Tattvāloka*, section 43.

stretch your legs, there is some cognition of the outgoing energy and of the successive positions taken up by the moving limbs. Besides, there is another reason for not drawing a hard and fast line between them. The active senses take their cue generally from those that are cognitive, while they contribute in their turn some of the most important elements of our knowledge of the world. For a collateral result of voluntary movement is the perfection of our idea of space and of objects as external realities. Every sensation has, it is true, a certain local colouring. But we do not get beyond this rudimentary conception even in passive touch, which gives us, according to the yogi, little more than a feeling of temperature. The sense of contact with a foreign substance develops only when a subjective initiation meets with resistance. A dynamic sense is included, therefore in our knowledge of objects as existing independently of ourselves. And a similar, though simpler, feeling of effort caused again by subjectively determined movement completes our notion of space.

The organic sensations are connected with the operations of the vital energy which manifests itself in five distinct ways.\* It ensures the vigour and alertness of those parts of the system which furnish the physiological concomitants of sensations. It keeps up animal heat by a proper working of the vital organs. It maintains the functional tone of the motor apparatus, voluntary as well as reflex. It separates the essential from the inessential in what is taken in as breath, food and drink. Finally, it distributes the nutrients in due proportion throughout the system. Thus the entire body is the field of its activity. And this activity is accompanied by sensations, which are painfully pronounced when the machine is anywhere out of order or suffers from lack of materials. Such, for instance, are the sensations of hunger, thirst, tight-breathing and malaise. But the activity which thus renovates and sustains the body is not the generator of mental life as well. It would be absurd to regard thought as a secondary result of a machine in action.

\* The five forms of vital energy are called *prāṇa*, *udāna*, *vyāna*, *samāna* and *apāna*. The sensations resulting from them are not always classed separately because they accompany and get mixed up with other forms of experience.

The motive force is supplied, in fact, by thought when it identifies the ego with the machine-like body (*śārīrābhimāna*). So the energy of which we have spoken is in the last resort the energy of self-consciousness extended beyond its proper limits by a kind of automorphism. The yogī takes it in that light, and he strives, therefore, to control it for the attainment of extraordinary powers and for that extreme form of abstraction which is required for meditating on ultimate realities.

We have now completed our survey of the psychical powers that are characterised as external in this system of philosophy. Such a grouping of the cognitive and active senses is, indeed, perfectly intelligible, since they reflect in consciousness the relations of give and take between the organism and its environment. But the reason is not quite so obvious for the inclusion in the same class of the organic senses. It may, however, be clear from the foregoing analysis that they give us sensations closely connected with our biological life, which again is dependent on the absorption of foreign matter in the system. For in building up, sustaining and working the complex machinery which is the material counterpart of our mind, the vital energy deals with things that are supplied from outside. It is an intricate and elaborate adjustment to external forces, an adjustment which yields a new set of sensations. So three sets of cognitive factors answer to the interrelation between the internal and external mechanisms through general adaptation, excitement and response.

There is a deeper reason for classing them together. The yogī holds, as we have seen, that even organic life cannot go on without being sustained and directed by the mind. Just as the eye fails to see unless united to it, even so the liver and the heart cease to perform their functions when bereft of its quickening and regulating influence. It is, in fact, the central principle around which the process of organic adjustment goes on. And this process is in consequence attended by a sense of life, which develops into a determined and more or less painful effort to continue it if it is impeded as, for example, when breathing becomes difficult or the heart is intermittent in its activity. This sense is, no doubt, vague and rudimentary except when the even flow of life is interrupted. But such as it is, it forms the sub-

stratum of intenser and more specialised but less persistent forms of consciousness. We have seen that the permanent readiness to act of the cognitive and active senses indicates an embryonic will or personality which finds expression in these forms to relate itself to what is outside. The same will shows itself in the organic senses not as nascent action but as a continual activity for the growth and preservation of the system. For the senses do not work in isolation to furnish the data of mental life. Higher principles are involved from the outset as the impulse comes from them. Or to put it otherwise, the mind does not wait to be evolved by appeals from outside, but exists with all its determinations for receiving and answering them when they come.\* Its subsequent history is, no doubt, a process of growth effected by the appropriation of foreign materials. These, however, cannot create it, as it must be already there with the senses which are its organs of relation to appropriate them as nutrients. But what is it apart from the senses? It consists primarily of the consciousness of the self as existing (*asmitimātra*) which passes by an easy transition into the consciousness of the self as being this or that (*ahamkāra*) and in doing so develops besides the senses a principle of synthesis (*manas*) by which they come to be related to one another. These three constitute the mind (*citta*) along with reminiscences (*vāsanās*) of past experience and subjective habits of thought and activity (*karmāśayas*). But they are specifically called the inner senses or instruments, and the designation is significant as it furnishes a shortcut to their place and function in the life of the individual. They are inner as not being in immediate connection with external things to which they are related by the senses. Nevertheless, they are instruments or organs of mediation themselves as they furnish objects of experience to the self.

## 12. The understanding

For a fuller comprehension of the connection between sense and understanding as conceived in this system, it is neces-

\* The opposite view is not quite as modern as is sometimes supposed. It is very finely expressed in the 306th verse of Śāntarākṣita's *Ātmaparīkṣā Tatīvasaṃgraha*, which may be translated as follows:—The senses serve no useful purpose if consciousness is constant. You do not need fuel if fire may burn without being fed.



sary to pass in review the various cognitive processes recognised by it. First among them is perception in the widest sense so as to include our knowledge of subjective states. Next comes retention or persistence of a perception as a fact of the mind though not of ordinary consciousness. This renders possible the third and more important process of revival or reinstatement of the previous experience in the form of a representative image, attended as it is by the consciousness that it is a copy of what has been already known. The mind thus equipped with direct presentation and mental pictures of previous presentations proceeds often to analyse them with a view to separate features or attributes that are of relatively abiding interest from others which are recognised as having only an occasional and fugitive value. This abstraction paves the way for the next step which is the integration of the selected features in the shape of a concept or idea of a class of things which bear striking affinities with one another. Such concepts may be of objects which we come across in the ordinary business of life or they may typify realities which must be comprehended for a satisfying explanation of the riddle of the universe. Lastly, these are taken up in forms of mental synthesis known as judgments which may be apprehensions of objective relations or determination of particular lines of activity as desirable.\*

The mind appears, therefore, to work with different kinds of materials, viz., present experience, experience which has sunk below the threshold of ordinary consciousness and is awaiting a suitable occasion for resurgence, and the same experience when revived as an image. Images figure, indeed, largely in the higher reaches of thought; for out of them are obtained by successive processes of filtration concepts of various orders of generality which cease in consequence of the operation to be loudly coloured by sensuous elements. These concepts are applied in their turn to concrete experience for interpreting it or giving it new meanings. And the application is direct where grounds of resem-

\* The Yogic names of these processes are *grahana*, *dhāraṇa*, *smṛti*, *ūha*, *apoha*, *tattvajñāna* and *abhiniveśa*. See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 18 and *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*, I. 6.

blance are obvious; but elsewhere it requires mediation by means of common signs. This is described in some works on Yoga as movement towards or away from a certain position just as such movement appears to be proper or otherwise; and the description has the merit of covering practical judgments as well.

We see then the forces that are engaged in working the complicated machinery of thought. The first is retentive energy without which we should be restricted to the sensuous present. Some important propositions are laid down by writers on Yoga for clearly defining it. No experience is, according to them, ever really forgotten, though circumstances may permit it to remain undistinguished in the obscurity of the past. It recedes, indeed, to the background after being exposed for a time to the lime-light of attention. But it never becomes thereby what is called a mere trace or impression entirely out of the field of consciousness. In other words, the activity which attends all facts of consciousness remains with it even in this apparently quiescent state, though it is less intense or conspicuous because other things happen to engross our interest. We cannot on any other supposition account for the phenomenon of recall, and equally inexplicable would be the power which yogis possess of referring to details of your past experience which you yourself seem to have forgotten. In fact, the only rational explanation that can be offered of these extraordinary revelations is that the past continues to live and act in you, though signs of this activity are discernible only by their trained and exceptionally observant minds.

The next important faculty is that which effects the synthesis of elements of knowledge which have been unrelated till then or, as a step antecedent to it, breaks up a complex presentation into its constituent factors. It comes into play when the need is felt of squaring new experience with previous conceptions or a new situation with the familiar uses of life. Thus it has both a speculative and a practical aspect and is regarded on that account as presiding over the whole set of cognitive and active senses. It presides also over the reminiscences of the past, which must be regarded as at least partially awake, for judgment would be both needless and impossible unless

new information puts old thoughts and motives to a strain.\* The mind leans, therefore, on old experience even when grasping a novel presentation.

This synthetic activity implies moreover a prior and more fundamental synthesis. For objects cannot be related to one another unless the corresponding ideas are related to a common centre, the self. Or to put it otherwise, a new experience comes to be combined with an old concept only because both of them are felt to belong to the identical individual. They are appropriated by him in the first instance and then brought together by an act of judgment. It is true that the consciousness of the self does not appear concurrently with that of the objects. But introspection reveals that it is there, though the interest of the moment centres round the necessity of harmonising the incoming knowledge with the existing stock and so leaves the owner of both somewhat in the dark. In fact, even an erroneous judgment about them would be impossible, unless through the presence, suppressed it may be, but nonetheless real, of this integrating entity.†

The salient fact then is that every bit of thought or knowledge is claimed as a possession. The claim is ultimately the assertion of a relation of identity and amounts, therefore, to an extension of the self. When I see a pitcher before me, I become for the time being the knower of that pitcher. When I claim my body as mine, my pretension is that I am an embodied being. When actions are similarly acknowledged, the acknowledgment is an admission of sameness between myself and the author of those actions. These are, indeed, instances of very simple experience; but the complexity of psychosis makes no difference in the matter. I seem, indeed, to lose sight of myself while occupied with a difficult problem. But if my solution is challenged, I have no hesitation in claiming it as

\* It is sometimes called *hrdaya*, when its capacity for retaining the traces of previous experience is referred to. *Sāṃkhya-Sūtra*, II. 42 says that it is able to direct the senses because it has conserved in some way all sorts of past activity and impression. The name that is given to it, in view of its analytical and synthetical activity, is *manas*, which as used in ordinary parlance is equivalent to mind.

† The Sanskrit name for it is *ahamkāra* its function being defined as *abhi māna* or identification of the self with other things.

mine. In fact, individual satisfaction or disappointment lurks in all my thoughts, and even my observations of objective realities have a certain individual twist. Here then we have the dynamic phase of the ego or self which is the *primum mobile* in every kind of cognition and activity.

The self must exist, however, in some simpler and more original form before it can thus extend its limits. What then is its essence? The answer of the yogi is that it is neither more nor less than the simplest form of consciousness, for I exist only so far as I know, cognise or feel myself, knowing and existence being absolutely identical in this case. Self-consciousness is, therefore, the life-breath of all thought and volition. And it is the material too, for we cannot conceive how they can be so intimately held together by anything which is different from them. We feel also that if the accretions of particular knowledge and impulse can be got rid of, there will be left over the mere conviction that we exist. This substratum of self-consciousness is not, therefore, an accident of experience but the primary and indubitable fact in it.\*

Analysis of thought gives us, therefore, the result which was indicated in another connection, viz., that three principles are involved in working up the raw materials furnished by the senses. First, there is consciousness in its purest and simplest form as a background, not always sufficiently defined, for more specific experience or, to put it otherwise, consciousness of the self as a thinking principle which exists apart from everything else. Then there is the consciousness of the self as receiving impressions from an alien world and deciding to react on it, as active throughout the processes and variously modified or coloured by its own activity. And finally there is the principle

\* It has been called, therefore, the understanding or the essence of the understanding (*buddhi* or *buddhi-sattva*). Treatises on Yoga are not alone in claiming this pre-eminence for self-consciousness. Compare the following statements in *Moksa-Dharma* in the *Śānti-Parva* of the *Mahābhārata*. 'Buddhi completes the appropriation or apprehension of every object of knowledge and is, therefore, the highest form of it.' 'Buddhi-sattva is merely the property or possession of the true Self or an object which depends entirely on this Self for existence.' 'The wise praise *buddhi-sattva* because there is nothing superior to it among evolutes. We know by inference that the true Self rests entirely on it.'

of conservation and synthesis, which retains previous experience and activity in the form of traces and habits and combines them with present impressions. Each is less fundamental than the one that precedes it, so that the third is derived from the second which in its turn is derived from the first. But this evolution must not be taken to denote the supersession of simpler forms by what is more complex, for all three are present in every act of thought. Hence they are collectively called the system of inner instruments to bring out the truth that they are operative like the senses in the development of concrete experience, though marked off from the latter by their comparative remoteness from the world outside.

We have found, however, nothing in this analysis of higher thought which is altogether absent from perception. When I perceive the pitcher before me, presentative and representative elements combine in the psychosis, and the blend is referred or related to one of my old concepts. The process in the other case is only more explicit and more definitely represented in words. But this intimate association with verbal signs is an advantage of doubtful value, for language is both a handicap and a help owing to its manifold imperfections. Percepts again are more direct and richer in details than the products of higher thought. Hence perception is to the yogi the type of the cognitive process, and the insight into spiritual realities that he aims at is expected to have all the fulness, immediacy and certainty of this concrete experience. It is not imageless thought or elimination of whatever gives form and colour to it that he strives for, but thought which outruns at last the slow, faltering pace of judgment and inference and like a far-flashing beam of light illumines in an instant the remotest perspectives as well as the immediate practical foreground.

### 13. *Classification of knowledge*

But if perception is the type of intellectual activity, it follows that the mind is, above all, an organ of knowledge or an instrument for the apprehension of truth. And in defining truth as the correspondence of thought or its expression with reality, the *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* makes it clear that the mind is mainly concerned with judgments which go beyond subjective pheno-

mena and with propositions in which judgments easily and usually clothe themselves.\* Language is not, indeed, absolutely necessary for such thought, as the highest truths are discovered by meditation like *nirvitarka* and *nirvicāra* which dispense with its assistance. But it is a common concomitant if we take it to include all kinds of signs of ideas, though verbal signs are almost universally employed among men as being the most convenient and serviceable. Owing, however, to this intimate connection, error may lie in the form which appears to give definiteness to thought as well as in the thought itself. Thus a man afflicted with the malady of double vision commits a mistake if he says that there are two moons though he is quite within the bounds of truth so long as he limits himself to a statement of what he sees.

Truths may be relative or absolute according as the reference is to what is mutable or otherwise. Things are said to be mutable when they have evolved out of simpler materials into which they must resolve themselves with the disappearance of the plastic stress that brought them into being. Relative truths have a twofold imperfection to their credit owing to the variability of the objects of apprehension and of the conditions under which they are apprehended. They are separated, therefore, from errors by a thin and shifting partition, which is often overlooked in speculation and practice. The milk that tastes sweet in the morning will turn sour in the afternoon, and it will be liked or disliked according as your stomach is empty or full. So the proposition that 'milk is sweet and agreeable' is true only when the qualifications are kept clearly in view. The most important among relative truths are those that tell us about the most pervasive and least changeful of appearances. Such are the elements, gross and subtle, which appear in consciousness as sense impressions. Such are also the senses and higher faculties of the mind which are exhibited in the various forms of consciousness. So absolute truths must relate to the ultimate ground or material of all these appearances, to the potency, in other words, which evolves as

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 30.

determinate forms of mind and matter and to the supreme principle of Intelligence without which they cannot be what they are.

Truths are also classified as secular (*Vyāvahārika*, *laukika* or *ārthika*) and spiritual (*pāramārthika*) according as they are conducive to worldly interests or to spiritual well-being. And the highest among spiritual truths is the conviction that Intelligence is immutable and self-sufficient, though the machinery of thought and conduct with their partial and temporary achievements appears transfigured in its timeless radiance as particular forms or aspects of it. But a classification more pertinent to psychological enquiry is that which divides knowledge into three groups with reference to its objects, which may be either things outside the mind or processes within it or entities which both of them presuppose and, therefore, indirectly testify to.

The sphere of knowledge or, what comes to the same thing, of the activity of the understanding is, therefore, co-extensive with the sphere of existence in the widest sense.\* But knowledge is not an end in itself as it is sought only because it is helpful in the attainment of a fuller life. It is subordinate in the first instance to our practical needs, as it defines them and discovers the means by which they may be met. But when partial and temporary goods fail to satisfy, it points beyond them to ultimate realities and thus suggests a way of escape out of itself and the phenomenal world in which it lives and moves.

The Jainas hold that the mind's power of perceiving things is unalterably determined by the conformation of the body, and

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, IV. 23 and the comments of Vācaspati Miśra, Vijñāna-Bhikṣu and Swāmi Hariharānanda. The interpretation offered in *Bhāṣvatī* seems to be most in keeping with the general tenor of the system. Vācaspati Miśra says that as a blue thing is directly perceived because it colours the mind, so Intelligence is directly perceived because its light is on the mind. And he adds that when he perceives the blue thing before him, he gets immediately both the knower and its object, though they are not properly distinguished. Vijñāna-Bhikṣu and Swāmi Bālarāmodāśin say that the apparatus of knowing is revealed along with the knower and the known so that the mind is like a crystal vase with two differently coloured things on two sides of it. You get in its appearance the transparency of crystal and the tints of the objects that are in contact with it, just as you get all the three factors of knowledge in every state of consciousness. But this appears like giving away what Yoga particularly stands for. Pure Intelligence is the efficient cause of the mind and is, therefore, directly incognisable.

they measure the receptivity of the latter by ordinary experience. But this theory is stultified by manner in which the yogī perceives what is distant or screened from ordinary observation by the presence of other things. He seems to possess in the way of intuition what we have to explore bit by bit just as circumstances offer opportunities of coming in contact with them. Yet this achievement of his does not imply that his mind is differently constituted. It is the ordinary faculty of observation, the energy of consciousness transmuted into the organ of objective experience that is at work in him. There is nothing, indeed, in the nature of the mind that should restrict its power of perception to the immediate neighbourhood. And if the limits are generally very narrow, it is owing to acquired habits of observing, thinking and feeling, which have their physical counterparts in the structure and impressionability of the bodily organs. But the limits are always elastic, and they may be extended by a systematic attempt to remove obstacles that we have ourselves put up.\* The yogī contends that education along right lines is all that is needed for the purpose and so he is far from making a mystery or miracle of it. He admits, indeed, that some men are constitutionally better fitted for such a development of powers than others. The admission, however, does not amount to a qualification of his faith in perfectibility by means of education as the superior aptitude is ascribed to proper training in some previous existence.

#### 14. *Reality of external objects*

But have the perceived objects an independent and external existence? The subjectivist denies that they exist in their own right and apart from the perceiving mind. And he observes in support of his view that their existence is testified to by mental images, while such images enter also into the texture of our dreams, which have nothing to do with a world outside them. There can be, however, no other way of being sure of their existence than that of finding them reflected in our minds, and even dream-images are not altogether unrelated to external stimu-

\* But this is seldom possible in the same life. *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* mentions only one instance, viz., that of Nandīśvara which amounted to translation to a higher order of existence.



lation present and past. Moreover while perceiving, we feel that we are in contact with a world of common cognition, and there is absolutely no ground for impeaching the validity of this conviction. For others perceive the same object that I do, and they may go on perceiving it after it has disappeared from my field of vision. It is, therefore, a public object, while my perception is entirely my own. And this is another reason for challenging the position of the subjectivist, for I do not see why my perception should tally with yours in spite of its admitted privacy unless our minds happen to be focused on the same object. Besides, my knowledge of an object changes or grows with the progress of experience; and if I accept the theory in question, I must assume that the object also undergoes a similar transformation. Lastly, this knowledge may be differently coloured by feelings and impulses at different times, while it is recognised that these subjective elements do not and cannot alter the nature of the presentation base. It is independent, therefore, of temperament and outlook, being determined mainly by external stimulus.

Sensations are, indeed, thrust upon us in the sense that we have hardly any control over their character and intensity. And this is true even of the experience of the yogī, which appears so very different from ours, only because he has trained his mind for a clarity and accuracy of observation which we have no claim to. He sees better and farther than we do or rather he sees as it were in the full light of day what we grope after in the twilight of our unregulated faculties. And this intellectual superiority goes hand in hand in him with practical efficiency of a high order, which appears to our befogged understanding like the power of working miracles.\* But the laws of the universe are more sacred

\* The possibility of the so-called miracles is only a deduction from a fundamental principle of Yoga, which is thus stated by Dr. Seal. "The original Energy is one and ubiquitous, and everything, therefore, exists in everything else *potentialiter*, without prejudice to the generic and specific differences of things." It is some of these potentialities unknown to ordinary mortals that are converted into facts by the superior will of the yogī, when the occasion justifies such a conversion. That the will can effect movement or change in material bodies cannot be disputed by those who believe that they can move their hands and legs. So scepticism translates itself into a refusal to believe that the ordinary limits of its capacity may be transcended.

and inviolable in his estimation than they are to us, as they furnish the conditions required for working off weakness and error. Our so-called laws are, however, often merely approximations to the truth, which he comprehends more thoroughly and can, therefore, utilise more successfully when the occasion arises for turning them to account.

### 15. *Composition of the mind*

The mind is conceived in Yoga as a reservoir of inexhaustible energy, which manifests itself in defective thought and conduct only because there are obstacles to a fuller manifestation of it. Below the surface there are always finer and subtler activities that cannot overcome the resistance which they have to encounter and so are like the real, though imperceptible, pressure of water on a wall which prevents it from flowing freely. Education should aim, therefore, at removing the hindrances in the form of passions and prejudices instead of trying to confirm by practice the faulty methods of thinking and acting that we follow at present. Habit is strength, indeed, in a way; but unless wisely cultivated and controlled, it becomes a fatal facility in running into error and indiscretion. So the essence of yogic training consists in suppressing the vagaries of the mind which is incessantly active and in forming habits of unbiassed reflection and disinterested behaviour. And such is also the nature of the discipline that Buddhism inculcates. But it is related in Yoga to a dynamic conception of the mind which is very different from the Buddhist doctrine that the mind is only a series of evanescent facts of consciousness, each of which furnishes by its exit the occasion for the advent of the next.\* The yogī takes issue, therefore, with the Buddhists when he says that the mere disappearance of a fact or state cannot be a sufficient reason for the appearance of another unless there is a common element in both which undergoes transformation. They would not go, however, beyond the observed relation of sequence and so they reject as an idol of the forum the belief in the continued existence of the mind behind the series of fleeting mental facts. We have already

\* See Ratnakīrti's *Kṣāṇabhāṅga-Siddhi*, part I.

examined in another connection their arguments in favour of extreme empiricism. But these are sometimes clenched by analogies as when it is said that the sameness of the mind is like that of the flame of a lamp, which appears unchanged from moment to moment though consuming different drops of oil. But facts of consciousness, however diverse they may be, are accompanied by a perception of the self. So we get likeness alongside of difference which is more complex and, therefore, more difficult to explain than the instance of similarity by which Buddhists choose to illustrate the nature of mental life. Moreover, we have more than likeness in the simplest example of recollection, where the self presented is regarded as identical with the self that appeared in the original perception.\* We cannot, indeed, account for the continuity of experience without such a principle of connection and unity. And so unless we mean to pay ourselves with words, we must duly stress the universal cognition that the self is invariably present whatever other things may come and go.† The theory under review simply tags the facts that are to be explained. It is the inevitable reference of consciousness to the past more than the uninterrupted flux of conscious states that makes up the mind. And to treat the first as illusory or to translate it in terms of the second is to sacrifice clearness and precision for a mere semblance of simplicity.

\* So Ratnakīrti's explanatory analogy of the appearance of hair and nails exactly similar to those that have been removed does not clear up the point. See *Kṣāṇabhanga-Siddhi* part I.

† See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, I. 32 and Swāmi Bālarāmodāsin's and Swāmi Hariharānanda's notes on it. Vijñāna-Bhikṣu meets the Buddhist position in the following manner. The Vaināśikas say that the mind does not pass from one experience to another, being always momentary, so that psychoses have no substratum. But they cannot then consistently ask their disciples to practise meditation on a particular object to the exclusion of others, for they believe in each of them being single-in-intent (*pratyartha-niyatam*). Besides, their theory stultifies the sense of individuality, for the ego is distinguished from other things as constant and unchangeable, specially in recollection (*pratyabhijñā*). They may say, indeed, that this ego which is given in each conscious fact exists only so long as the fact is in evidence, so that there is no proof of an unchanging ego or of a stable mind as the substratum of particular psychoses. But the reply is that arguments cannot disprove direct apprehension, being always based on it.—*Yoga-Vārttika*, I.32.

Philosophy cannot with a clear conscience say that thoughts are prevented from flying about loose like so many independent entities only by the fragile bonds of resemblance and contiguity. Nor can it set enquiry at rest by the observation that each particular thought is a thinker on its own account, as a rational explanation is still required of the manner in which it cognises and appropriates other thoughts as well. So it has to accept the verdict of common sense that behind the fleeting pulses of thought there is a more stable or persistent object which, by conserving them in some way, furnishes the ground for the apprehension of their affinities and differences.

Consciousness is, therefore, not quite the whole story, nor even the greater part of it. Examine any item of experience, and you will find that though the antecedent experience is intimately related to it, yet it owes its vitality and form in no small measure to forces that are below the surface, to forces that buoy it up for a time and then take it away in their downward course to lie in undisturbed forgetfulness till an occasion arises for its recall.\* You think, you will and you remember; but of these you are not cognisant in full detail, the conscious content being the index of an antecedent activity and of traces or dispositions which serve to connect present experience with what is past.

The phrase "stream of consciousness" occurs, indeed, in yogic literature; but it is used for expository convenience. Yoga holds that we do not get a perfectly continuous flow of conscious states. What we do get is a succession with real, though almost inappreciable, time-gaps. These break up too the unity of the central fact of self-consciousness which is ordinarily overlaid with more concrete experience. And intermittence appears to be its character even when the yogi abstracts from the materials of sense and the endless variety of thoughts that

\* It should be noted that two different things are somewhat mixed up here, *viz.*, the substantiality or comparative stability of the mind which is proved by the recurrence of thoughts and feelings and the sense of permanence and immutability which must be traced not to the changeful ego but to some principle behind it which can never be directly perceived. *Pratyabhijñā* testifies however, in different ways to both of them, *viz.*, to the substantiality of the mind and to the existence of this principle.

they give birth to in order to meditate on the self. For all that he finds in this mother-soil of experience is a series of exactly similar cognitions, each of which wells up for a momentary glitter from the depths of nescience.

True, there are passages in works on Yoga which seem to endorse the Buddhist doctrine by defining the mind as an aggregate of conscious states. But such a characterisation is dictated by a practical need, *viz.*, that of inhibiting mental activity with a view to secure that serenity of temper, that placid mood which is necessary for the apprehension of spiritual realities. You cannot get hold of the faculties and the subliminal impressions, and so if you care for the required composure, you must shut out what they produce in the form of thoughts, sentiments and desires. These then in their totality are the mind for the supreme object which the yogī can never afford to lose sight of. But he duly stresses the fact that they form only a section of our entire psychical life, and that to comprehend them properly we must not deny the existence of lower sections which are obscure, indeed, but not less important because in them lie all the causality and the becoming. We may, if we choose, compare experience to a superb edifice; but he would ask us to remember that it stands on a substructure of comparative insentience.

The following are the constituents of the mind that do not lend themselves to direct observation. First, there is the energy which sustains the physical organism in working order after building it up as a means of self-expression. We have a notable manifestation of it in respiration during sleep; but organic life is kept in continual movement in other ways too. Then there is the energy that is responsible for periodical transitions as from sleep to dreaming or waking. Next come two types of energy which bring about movements of particular sense-organs or limbs in unconscious and voluntary activity. To these have to be added reminiscences of past experience and habits of thought and conduct formed and strengthened in the present and previous lives. The influence of these is so pervasive and profound as to make every new knowledge a rediscovery of what has been but lost sight of and every new enterprise a repetition under altered conditions of what has been already attempted. Lastly, there is the energy that manifests itself in the inhibition of every

form of consciousness, which involves considerable effort at the outset but becomes easier with practice.\*

#### 16. *Theories of knowledge*

The mind is ordinarily conceived as a crowded theatre in which cognised facts appear and slide away or suffer transformation before they disappear. But this is a partial view as facts of consciousness are like patches of light on the bosom of a dark, surging and bottomless stream, the movements of which claim a share in determining their duration and character. What then is the mind, which appears to be largely composed of elements that are outside the field of consciousness and are, moreover, mechanical in their operation? The answer of the yogī is best given by comparing his view-point with some other conceptions of it. We have seen that he rejects the psychological atomism of the Buddhists on the ground that it does not offer an adequate explanation of mental phenomena. He finds here another reason for the rejection in the circumstance that units of consciousness are closely related to obscure forces and principles, to hidden virtualities that furnish a comparatively stable substratum for these evanescent states. At the same time he cannot accept the materialism of the *Vaiśeṣikas*, who hold that the mind is a product or function of the body. The cause, he says, cannot be the absolute negation of the effect, and so conscious states, whatever their affinities may be to unconscious things, cannot be ascribed entirely to them. To compare consciousness, therefore, to the ferment set up in apparently inactive materials by a proper combination of them is to overlook an irreducible difference.†

His epistemology has certain points in common with the empiricism of Locke. The mind does not bring with it certain

\* See *Yoga-Vārttika* and *Bhāsvatī* as well as *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* III. 15 and 18. The question arises whether Yoga gives up here its position that things are but aggregates of perceptible features. And the answer is in the negative. What are called obscure here are only relatively so, and energy is activity so subtle as to be ordinarily imperceptible.

† See *Sāṃkhya-Sūtra*, III. 22 which points out that the difference in these cases is by no means so radical as that between consciousness and unconsciousness.

ready-made ideas for the assortment and interpretation of what it gets as external and internal sensations. They furnish the materials from which are filtered the highest principles by the processes already mentioned. Moreover they give us the fullest details about what is in the mind and outside it. An external world is thus given directly in experience, but not as Locke would have us believe in the form of certain "primary qualities" which serve to differentiate it from the mind. Sound, thermal condition, colour, taste and smell are the primary qualities according to the yogī, and so his world, though external like that of Locke, is not necessarily extramental. He holds also that the mind is not quite a *tabula rasa* at the outset, as it comes to its task fortified by impressions and tendencies that have been left behind by antenatal experience, though he agrees with Locke in thinking that "innate ideas" form no part of its equipment.\*

To the absolute monism of the ancients, the yogī's objection is, broadly speaking, twofold. The world of sights and sounds is not an illusion as it is felt to be the expression of an independent and active principle. And the finite mind is not a mode or attribute of universal consciousness as it is always recognised to be a substantive entity, and no finespun theory can stultify primary experience.† Thus his standpoint is decidedly dualistic, and he would meet modern objective idealism by the observation that the ultimate reality cannot be self-consciousness, since we know it as a conjunction of dissimilar principles, and such it must be even in its most exalted form. He does not, indeed, deny the existence of a Being who surpasses us immeasurably in wisdom, goodness and might, and sways the forces that we live under instead of being swayed by them. But His mind too must be constituted like ours so far as the central thing in it is a self that lives by distinguishing itself from a not-self. And it makes no difference whether the not-self is

\* The circumstance that these impressions and impulses are often so admirably fitted to the details of life raises, according to the yogī, the presumption that they were acquired by experience. See *Tattva-Vaiśāradi*, IV. 10.

† See *Sāmkhya-Sūtra*, II. 25 where this limit of speculative activity is definitely laid down.

within His mind or outside it, for the point is that the self cannot create the not-self as it comes into existence only when the other is there to confront it.

The yogī would take exception to objective idealism on other grounds too which have been already given. But they are restated here to bring out the important distinction that psychology is the starting point of his metaphysics and theology. The self, says he, is identified even in reflective moods with certain faculties and interests which determine its attitude towards what is outside, while in experiences which have a pronounced objective cast it is embedded in and obscured by what happens to engross attention for the time being. Thus it lives ordinarily in specific thoughts, feelings and resolves and is discernible only by introspection as their owner. In other words, it is continually but never completely presented, appearing as the centre now of knowledge and then of desire or activity. And when these are ruled out by an effort of abstraction, there remains an irreducible minimum of experience in the feeling that it exists. This "I" then as an actual entity and potential recipient of experience is cognised like other objects. It is given in experience and, therefore, not presupposed in it. As an object, again, it disappears with the experience in which it figures and does not come into existence till there is another experience to be owned.

The yogī concludes, therefore, that the mind is composite even to its inmost fibre, being made up of objects of knowledge with a core of awareness which must be traced to a foreign source. For he is not prepared to concede that awareness or intelligence is a virtue or attribute of the self when there is nothing in its nature which should make it susceptible like the latter to mutations or dependent on processes which are admittedly mechanical.\* The self is, no doubt, invariably linked to

\* Bhojarāja says that some would regard Intelligence as an attribute of the self, but that the text does not countenance this view—*Rājamārttaṇḍa*, II. 20. Vijnāna-Bhikṣu quotes from *smṛti* a passage which means that the true self is to be regarded as absolutely identical with intelligence and not as possessing intelligence as an attribute or an aspect, so that its nature is illumination and it is immutable, pervasive and blissful. And he adds by way of a comment that you may distinguish fire in some way from heat because



Intelligence, for it is absurd to speak of a self that is not conscious of its existence. But it is a *non sequitor* from this feature of empirical existence that Intelligence cannot exist apart from it. Personality is a limitation, and even when you attribute such perfection to it as it is capable of, you do not take away the ceaseless efforts for subduing discord and the artificial bounds of time and space which trace the field for them. But these are not of the essence of Intelligence, and so connection with a subject or bearer does not seem to be necessary for its existence.\* The limited thing that it is in every individual is only a provisional and specious appearance due to the creative but accidental relation between it and certain foreign elements. And all the efforts of the yogī are, therefore, directed to the supersession of this provisional existence, to the removal of this plausibility.

#### 17. Lack of finality in empirical consciousness

Plausibility is, no doubt, a serious indictment against empirical existence which is coming to be regarded as adequate for all the needs of our many-sided nature. Besides, one does not see at once how it may be reconciled with the pronounced realism of the yogī. He allows independence of the percipient's mind to the world of sights and sounds. He allows also a certain substantiality to the mind as well as the capacity for representing things as they are. How then can he convict life, which is but a system of relations between them, of unreality?

you may see fire without feeling it, but that you cannot conceive the true self apart from Intelligence, for one of them is but the other.—*Yoga-Vārttika*, II. 20.

\* Intelligence is not an act of mediation nor any number of such acts. Nor does it correspond to any of the two apparently identical terms that are related in self-consciousness. For as Swāmī Hariharānanda says, the subject in the proposition "I know myself" is the self of the present moment while the object is the self of the previous moment, and both are revealed. So the question arises,—what is it that reveals them? No other fact of consciousness can be equal to the feat, for self-consciousness is the basal element in more complex facts of consciousness. Hence we must say that the revelation is due to a principle that shines as it were with a pure, inward light and is only indirectly testified to by thought with its duality of subject apprehending and object apprehended. See *Bhāsvatī*, II. 20 and IV. 20.

The answer is that greater worth and genuineness are invariably ascribed to it than it has any claims to. Examine it as a business of the mind, and you will find a number of susceptibilities and powers working throughout in admirable union for the production of experience (*bhoga*). So the question arises,—for whom is the show started and kept up? The unreflecting man understands the world of sights and sounds by the show and says that it is for his mind. But the show is ultimately in his mind, being composed there of his restless thoughts and changing feelings that make life appear so busy and full. And when this is pointed out to him, he refers them to the self in him that feels the thrill of passion and is swayed to and fro by the hope of success and the misery of failure. His statement, however, shows that it too is observed and noted for its picturesque character. For as new experience pours in, it modifies this self in which though certain ingredients remain unchanged, others undergo a more or less gradual mutation, so that he gets no more than a case of identity on the whole. And relative identity of this sort may be claimed for many other things in the show.

There is a subtler self, no doubt, behind these automorphic developments, the self of which he is conscious in his most reflective moods as the thinking principle which marks itself off from all that is thought of and lives from moment to moment a more or less exclusive life. Even this self, however, cannot be classed apart from other items in the show, as it lies exposed before serene contemplation. But why it has been asked, should it not be both an object of knowledge and its ultimate cause? Light reveals itself, while revealing other things. This is, however, an improper extension of a correct analogy, as light perceives neither itself nor anything else, but is perceived by a sentient being both at its source and on the object on which it falls. Self-consciousness is like light, indeed, because without it nothing else can be perceived. But like light, again, it is not an entity beyond experience.\*

So the question still remains how or why they are known at all. Their essence consists in their fitness for expression, for

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 18 and IV. 19 and the notes on them in *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*.

appearance, that is to say, as objects or facts of consciousness. Objects, however, do not constitute consciousness by themselves, and there must, therefore, be a subject which is never an object, a principle to which are due all sorts of personalistic experience. But it cannot be a person because it is beyond the clash of oppositions which provide the field for his experience and activity. And if it is thought and spoken of as the owner of experience (*Bhoktā*), it is only because experience would be impossible without it. Is it then a metaphysical quiddity that is assumed to occupy an intermediate position between the mind and extramental existence ? Such, indeed, it may appear to those who have not yet learnt to reflect properly on the nature and conditions of experience. But as they acquire the power of turning away from secular concerns and meditating on the essentials of consciousness, they discover that nothing is more genuinely real than this inexpressible entity. The ability to focus attention on the ego furnishes the key to this important truth, because its contingent character appears when it is isolated and subjected to a searching analysis.

But the ultimate principle or pure Intelligence (*citiśakti*) is ordinarily identified with the ego in a vague and general way as in the judgment, "I am the knower." This is *avidyā*, the error at the root of empirical existence, for never do I completely divest myself of the idea that the thinking principle which calls itself 'I' is the final reality. And it gains in distinctness and detail when the shifting phases of personality are exalted one after another to this position of eminence. This is *asmitā* and it is protean in its forms and therefore hard to eliminate.\* But the evil does not end with it, for desire (*rāga*) and antipathy (*dveṣa*) and fear (*abhiniveśa*) arise when accidental and ephemeral appearances are regarded as integral portions of what is immutable. A ceaseless effort for perishable goods follows in which even perpetual change comes to be looked upon as a perpetual blessing. And thus an obstinate malady is fostered which operates over progressively widening areas.

\* Bhāvāganeśa says that *avidyā* is identification of *Puruṣa* and *Buddhi* in a way that allows a certain perception of difference between the two, while in *asmitā* they are completely identified in substance and attribute.—*Pratīpika*, II. 6.

Two objections may be anticipated to this point of view. The first is that the self as the centre of cognition and feeling is the negation of insentience and not a form of it. But such a criticism would be based on a misapprehension of the scope and purpose of ideal analysis. The yogī does not say that the self ever existed as an obscure but specific entity waiting for the light of consciousness to irradiate with thought and desire. He states, on the other hand, with iterated emphasis that there never was a time when they had separate existence.\* But he contends that when you come to examine self-consciousness, you find, on the one hand, awareness which is *sui generis* and, on the other, perceptibility, mutability and transitoriness, all of which appear so repugnant to its nature as to forbid the idea of a necessary connection with them. And the question how they came to be combined in the circumstances, he dismisses unceremoniously with the reply that it is an ultimate fact. At the same time he believes in the possibility of their separation and holds that the higher life consists in a ceaseless attempt to effect it or, in other

\* *Citta* or the mind is declared repeatedly to be unconscious, and this appears confusing to students who do not understand clearly the nature of ideal analysis of complex facts. There is no mind apart from Intelligence, nor is there any representation of objects (*saṃvedana*) without its being apprehended or appropriated (*pratisaṃvedana*). But no division of labour is involved in the process, as activity or mutation is incompatible with Intelligence, though its constant presence is responsible for the conversion of mental activity into conscious activity. Vijñāna-Bhikṣu says that the mental fact expressed in the proposition, 'I know the pitcher', cannot be otherwise explained, since the mind is not sentient (*Yoga-Vārttika*, IV. 22). What he means, however, is that its ultimate constituents are insentient, as he adds immediately after that every fact of consciousness arises out of indiscrimination which is due to the reflection of Intelligence. Similarly, Vācaspati Miśra says that though experience (*bhoga*) belongs properly to the mind, yet owing to the wrong identification of mind and Intelligence, it is thought to be a function of the latter. And this misconception, he adds, must be beginningless for it is present in every form of conscious activity (*Tattva-Vaiśāradi*, I. 4). But probably the simplest statement of the relation comes from Swāmi Hariharānanda who follows *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, I. 4 and the *Pāncasīkha-sūtra* quoted in it, without meddling in theories about reflection. The proximity, says he, of mind and Intelligence means their presence as an almost indecomposable unit in every form of experience, though the universal conviction that the mind is owned proves that they are distinct though related (*Bhāṣvatī*, I. 4).

words, to sift the inessential and impermanent features from the abiding principle of Intelligence or pure consciousness.

But it may be objected that this consciousness without determinations, this indifference point of subject and object will be a very poor thing when attained. Variety and definiteness are the soul of consciousness, and when they disappear, it will be almost indistinguishable from insentience even if it persists. It is difficult, indeed, for us to rebut this criticism effectively as our minds receive no assistance in the matter from ordinary experience.\* But the yogī maintains that if ever the rush of feeling and thought subsides, the conviction may dawn on us that the apparent richness of experience is only richness in distractions and shortcomings. He has discovered that our vision is weak, and that persistence in defective methods of observation has created in us a preference for stained and fading or faded forms. And he would exhort us, therefore, to cultivate the habit of correct thinking, till our insight becomes capable of sustaining the immutable splendour of spiritual reality. And then, according to him, form and movement will appear no better than limitations or misrepresentations of what is too great for them.

How then is experience related to knowledge of this reality ? The answer has been generally given with the assistance of analogies and by the employment of terms expressive of space-relations. But it is not a proof of speculative weakness. The poverty of language and the unfitness of the ordinary mind for the highest thought are the yogī's excuse for the introduction of poetical explanations in metaphysics. And it may be added that though the manner is poetical, the ideas conveyed are by no

\* Swāmi Hariharānanda makes the following statements on the subject in *Bhāṣya*, IV. 20 and *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*, IV. 33:—(1) Language is made up mainly of names of things that lend themselves to observation in some way or other; (2) We have to restrict ourselves, therefore, to terms of negation (*vikalpas*) in describing that which as the source of all observation can never be an object of it; (3) But it does not follow from this unavoidable use of negative terms that the source of knowledge is a negation of reality, though even our thoughts about it make it appear mutable and relative when they aim at definiteness, as, for instance, when we characterise it as ever-present, we imply that it lives on from moment to moment though it is beyond time.

means rare or unacceptable in philosophy. The following are examples of explanation of this type.

Hold a dark thing between the sun and yourself and look at it. It will appear to you square or round or of some other shape, and you will fancy that you see it which, however, you cannot do as the source of light is on the other side.\* The occasion for visual perception is external disturbance of a certain kind, and such a disturbance cannot originate in a surface that is dark. So what you actually see is sunlight intercepted, however, to the extent and in the manner determined by the obstacle. And such is your experience, which is essentially negative in character being virtually no more than failure to recognise the truth. This failure is, of course, more or less complete according as the distraction is more or less complex. But such is the perversity of the unredeemed human mind that it measures its success by the variety and thoroughness of the distractions.†

You are out in a primeval and tangled jungle of so-called realities where you happen to be too much absorbed in observing the endless variety of colour and form to enquire how they become possible at all. And it does not occur to you that what you really perceive is the manner in which the light of the sun is being cut up, obscured or deflected by certain obstacles. So you go on adding to the stock of your negative information, and instead of being dismayed by the sombre look and oppressive vastness of the forest, you try to come to rest, though in vain, in the admiring contemplation of the possibility that the task of surveying will never come to an end. In the meantime, you miss the wood and what lies beyond and gives reality to it for the trees. So you must get out of the wood at all costs and let the unstinted glory of the noon-day sun stream upon you, for only then will it be possible for you to see the wood in its right perspective.

\* See the discussions in *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 23 and in comments on it.

† The idea developed here is powerfully expressed in the 9th *sūkta* of the 6th *maṇḍala* of the *Rgveda* in the following manner.—My senses are turned away from the light that is in my heart. My mind wanders far from it. So what can I say about it or think about it? Compare the yogic expression, *pratyakcetana*. And see *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 23 and *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*, II. 17, 20 & 23.

## CHAPTER IV

### NATURE

#### 1. *Composition of the external world*

The external world appeals to us through the five special senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell. We do, indeed, obtain a fuller insight into its reality and independence by reacting on it. And we complete our picture only when we fit sense-presentations both in general outline and in detail in a spatio-temporal framework of our own. But these supplementary activities merely interpret or set forth in an intelligible scheme materials furnished by the senses, and so they cannot be regarded as original sources of information. Space and time, for instance, cannot be conceived apart from the objects and events which they appear to relate to one another. And the strain sensations that accompany neuromuscular activity remain mere subjective phenomena so long as they are not linked to knowledge derived from external stimulus.

The adequacy of the objective reference in sense data has been challenged, however, on the ground that no logic compels us to go beyond these fleeting appearances to relatively permanent existences outside. But, as already observed, it is a matter not of logical necessity but of immediate and unavoidable conviction, a conviction, moreover, which is supported by a comparison of my notes with yours, since they disclose a striking resemblance in the main lines of our objective experience.\* We cannot in deference to any metaphysical theory help believing that objects are independent of our apprehension of them which is both transitory and private. There lies capsulated, in fact, in every sensation this duality of the external and the internal, and those who speak of its uncompromising simplicity as a subjective fact gratuitously ignore the seed of distinction, for unless the difference is there *ab initio*, mere sensibility can never give us a

\* See *Sāmkhya-Sūtra*, I. 42 and *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, IV. 14 and 15 as well as Ratnakīrti's *Kṣaṇabhangasiddhi* in which subjective idealism is defended.

separate world with its own affairs and activities. Besides, even errors of observation fail to disturb the assurance of its existence apart from our accidental perception of its features. Its reality has been questioned, indeed, or rather summarily rejected as a mere assumption by certain philosophers. But since this reality is a fundamental datum of perceptual life, since we never divest ourselves of the belief that the things we see do not cease to be when our attention is withdrawn from them, all that philosophy may reasonably attempt to do is to render this universal and primary assurance explicit and consistent.

## 2. *The five elements or Mahābhūtas*

If then our object is to discover the ultimate nature and significance of external reality, nothing can bring us more directly to the heart of the problem than the recognition of the fact that in spite of its oppressive magnitude and bewildering variety, all that it has to say to us is couched in the language of five distinct classes of sensations. And once this fact is accepted, no great speculative effort is required to advance to the next position that there are five different forms of existence to answer to the five specific types of experience evoked in us. In adopting it, however, we do not tie ourselves to any particular theory about the nature of those existences or the possibility of tracing them to a single primordial reality. These are questions which can be taken up with any advantage only after the ground has been cleared of all sorts of hypotheses and verbal confusions. And so we start on our enquiry with a plain acknowledgment of the homely truth that Nature in spite of its infinite richness presents to us only five different phases of existence. Objects are various, indeed; but any aspect independent of those that correspond to the five varieties of sensations they cannot be said to possess. Externality appears at first sight to be a more important and independent feature inasmuch as it is common to all of them, whatever their dissimilarities may be. But we go beyond presentations when we understand it to mean existence in space and possession of certain spatial attributes as the basis of less essential qualities. They are, no doubt, alien to us and have a history of their own. Spread-outness, however, and volume we never get apart from the sensations that cover and fill them, while the



concept of space as a limitless receptacle is a mere abstraction from concrete sense data, so that we are still within their limits while speaking of space and spatial attributes.

These simple constituents of objective apprehension mingle with one another in different ways like the elements of Chemistry. But unlike the latter they never lose themselves or surrender their distinctive characters in building up compounds. Moreover, while their co-presence is the general rule, the yogi is able to isolate them completely, and then it comes home to him that each of them is the index of an entity that is independent of other forms of objective existence. How then should we characterise these *ratio essendi* of our perceptual life ? They are certainly mutable, since were they constant and uniform in their operation, there would be no break and no variety in it. They must be insentient too inasmuch as they are not manifestations of our sensibility but the causes of such manifestations.\* Hence each of them may be defined as the variable and unconscious condition of sensations of a particular class. All the differences that appear in these have to be referred back to it, as there is otherwise no reason why the cognitive principle should articulate in so many ways. Self-consciousness does, indeed, involve an object of knowledge as well as its recipient, but that cannot justify us in sweeping unceremoniously all the wealth and variety of sense data into a closed circle. Nor may we connect them immediately with a featureless homogeneity outside the limits of the mind. For it is certainly more reasonable to assume a plurality of active principles, rich both in form and variation, to account for their patent diversities.

A careful examination of Sāṃkhya and Yoga does not permit us to go beyond this guarded statement about the nature of the external realities that are directly responsible for our sensations. A causal relation is, in fact, almost all that is indicated in characterising them. But ambiguity has resulted from giving them name, which are used in common parlance to designate the familiar divisions of the world as perceived by us. For ethe-

\* See *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā*, 10, 11 where mutability, insentience, manifoldness and the tendency to combine with other elements in spite of their possessing distinctive characters are ascribed to all sorts of natural phenomena.

real space is said to be the cause of sounds, air of heat and cold, fire of colours, water of tastes and the earth of odours. But the compositeness of our perceptions, from whatever direction they may be derived, precludes the identification of their causes with the broad divisions of Nature which are often separately perceived. Odours are certainly not confined to the earth, nor does water enjoy an undisputed superiority over solids in giving us our sensations of taste, nor again is the air the exclusive or even the chief source of thermal sensations. Nor can it be pretended that these too obvious facts escaped notice in the misty morning of human speculation. Besides, if the elements are so patent to ordinary experience, one does not see why a special process remarkable alike for its extreme difficulty and for its remoteness from ordinary methods of perception has been prescribed for apprehending them.

If, however, they lie outside the sphere of common experience, should we not in frankness accept the subjectivist doctrine and say that the world exists only in so far as it is perceived? But the yogī is not prepared to convict it of unreality in this fashion, and he attributes the dimness of our vision in the matter to our intense preoccupation with the affairs of our practical life. It is because all ordinary knowing is relative to doing that those aspects of reality get neglected which take the urgency from passions and desires. Thus while the highly mutable compounds known as objects (*bhautikas*) receive more than their fair share of attention because they affect us for good or evil and are more or less amenable to our wishes, the elements (*mahābhūtas*) themselves are imperfectly apprehended or understood for the simple reason that they cannot be made to swerve from their course to serve a purpose or fulfil a need. But when thought ceases to act under the deflecting influence of hope and fear, we are able to see the world as it is and without those stresses and amplifications that are due to interest. And then we realise it to be the play of elements which furnish a common ground for diverse experience only because they are independent of our wills and indifferent to our likings and dislikes. We realise also that they are intensely active, as their activity is the occasion for the apprehending activity of the ego to which our waking life bears almost continuous witness. Sensations are, indeed, developments

of consciousness; but they are also thrust upon it inasmuch as their nature and intensity are determined from outside. This foreign activity finds, again, its consummation and meaning in sensation; it is, in fact, a movement (*pravṛtti*) from obscurity to revelation (*prākāśa*), from the indefiniteness of potentiality to distinctness of expression, and so it is inconceivable without reference to what it achieves. But since no object is ever fully apprehended, we must say that there is in external reality besides the activity which announces it to consciousness an antagonistic principle (*stṛhiti*) which resists such exhibition and converts knowledge into a sort of familiarity with the surfaces of things.

We occupy now a point of vantage from which it is possible to compare the yogi's conception of matter with the traditional view and the Buddhistic interpretation of it. He endorses the traditional view when he says that 'physical' objects exist independently of us and are, therefore, capable of being observed by different individuals simultaneously or in succession. So far he disagrees with the Buddhists who hold that sense data are the only constituents of the universe, and he disagrees for the sufficient reason that you cannot on this supposition account for its permanence and universal validity. The closed circle of consciousness of which they speak breaks, according to him, at innumerable points, your sensations being the most effective means of getting into touch with actuality. He never questions their right to report what lies outside them, nor does he say that it is only an empty locus that they testify to, all the manifoldness of experience being supplied from within. You have, so he would say, no more excuse for taking the objective reference in them in this arbitrarily restricted fashion than you have for rejecting it altogether as a mere attempt on the part of consciousness to overreach itself. And his reason for repudiating partial as well as complete subjectivism is that the homogeneity of self-consciousness cannot account for the rich variety of your perceptual life or, to put it more clearly, for that fully developed world of objects which is revealed in it.

Thus he accepts the verdict of common sense that the world lies around us ready to furnish materials for sentient experience, that its inexhaustible abundance is reflected in our consciousness only to the extent that our senses open themselves like

so many doors to the stimuli pouring in from it and that it will continue to exist even after our accidental perception of its features has come to a close. Where then is the difference between his conception of it and the naive realism of the traditional view ? The line of cleavage may be briefly indicated thus. While fully acknowledging the objectivity of the world, he refuses to admit that it consists of objects or enduring forms of inert matter juxtaposed in immeasurable space and played upon by forces which are thoroughly mechanical in character. It is mutation from one end to the other and has been always so, the seemingly static elements in it being traceable to the failure of the untrained understanding to follow modifications of extreme fineness and rapidity. So instead of an assortment of comparative immobilities marked off from one another by their geometrical structures and disturbed only occasionally by currents of motion, we have perpetual motion or activity which is cut up and distinguished as objects of various degrees of stability to suit the needs of our practical life.

Natural realism is a philosophically inexact conception of the nature of the universe. And yet it finds general acceptance because the understanding is in ordinary mortals subservient to their material needs. Besides, it is so overlaid with acquired peculiarities that though its right to register facts remains unimpeached, its present ability to register them correctly is open to serious question. And so the discipline of Yoga is prescribed to free it from the excrescences and to weed out the trick which it has learnt of distorting truth while professing to reveal it. Different courses are offered to suit different temperaments; but all of them have in view the supreme object of enabling the mind to assert its right to the apprehension of truth without effort and with perfect accuracy. No new faculty is, however, to be evolved which will grasp what is for ever beyond the reach of sense and understanding. But these are to be improved by concentration and cured of the narrowness that is due to self-interest till they are able to realise with all the distinctness of perception that the universe is not a fortuitous collocation of material atoms but a perpetual emanation from a source of unremitting and radiant activity which affects in much the same way similarly constituted minds.

Even now, in spite of their manifold shortcomings we are not exactly in absolute darkness, but in the dim greyness of the morning mists, which blur the perspective. So if the shortcomings disappear, everything may be expected to stand out clear and distinct as in the full light of the midday sun. The yogi's distrust of sensations is not based on the same ground as that of the subjectivist who says that we never get into touch with reality because our sensations always intervene between us and what we would experience. And he would rebut this favourite dogma with the verdict of common sense that it is the function of the mind to cognise what is presented to it and that if the cognition does not faithfully represent the original, it must be due to the circumstance that the cognising apparatus is not quite in order. So it should be possible to sift the fiction from the truth, the adventitious factor from the kernel of knowledge. The yogi succeeds, in fact, in doing this by reflective analysis and concentration, and he arrives at the conclusion that sensations are always due to some foreign activity, the form of which determines their nature. Thus all our knowledge of the external world is knowledge of motion, though the type of motion that gives us our sensations of sound is unlike that which results in the sensations, for instance, of light. Yet all these motions are alike in being unintelligible without reference to the resulting experience; they are, in fact, so many transitions from mere possibilities to the fulness of actualities. So if movement is of the essence of objective existence, equally so is its appearance in consciousness, apart from which the movement is inconceivable or rather meaningless.

There is, however, no movement within or outside us which is absolutely uninterrupted, and the yogi attributes the discontinuity to a principle which opposes outgoing activity and expression and may, therefore, be called the inner core of the thing. Thus the reality that we are cognisant of in perception contains three factors marked off from one another by irreducible difference. Knowledge is a record of action and consequently not the action itself, while self-containedness is the very opposite of it. Yet diverse as they are, they are found in indissoluble relation wherever there is an object of knowledge. You cannot, indeed, conceive phenomenal existence except as a union of these

elements, nor can you, in view of their obvious dissimilarity, regard them as offshoots or emanations of something more primary or comprehensive.\* At the same time, it is unnecessary and, therefore, unphilosophical to postulate a fourth principle for your explanation of the universe. Your perceptions do not indicate the presence of any such entity, nor are you constrained to assume it to account for the permanence and publicity of things, while their variety is adequately accounted for by the circumstance that the principles just mentioned mingle in ever-changing proportions. A balance of power among them is, in fact, not within the possibilities of the universe, since if the tendency to act is held completely in check by the principle of conservation, it must cease to exist as an object of knowledge so long as this equilibrium is maintained

### 3. *The atoms or tanmātras*

The yogī takes another step forward in his attempt to disclose the nature of the universe, and he does it because he cannot regard as final the analysis of perceptual life into sensations. They fall, it is true, into five well-marked classes; but even within each class their variety is enormous owing to differences in intensity, duration and character. Colours, for instance, are so many and so diverse that the resources of language are inadequate for naming all of them. And yet if they are to be attributed to the same type of foreign activity, we can account for their manifoldness only by assuming that the cause is in every case a series of homogeneous units and that the number of these components determines the quality and intensity of the sensation. To each such unit, then, there must correspond an equally simple mental state which lacks the characteristics that distinguish one sensation from another. That such colourless states do not figure in the many-coloured texture of our daily life proves nothing, as there is little in it that is not highly complex. On the other hand, we have the testimony of the yogī who is able to detect them by restricting the field of consciousness and resolutely shutting out from it everything that amounts to a

\* See *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā*, 11 and 12 and *Yoga-Sūtras*, II. 18 and 19 and comments on these.

practical interpretation of or an affective comment on what is directly presented to sense. When isolated in this way, they appear to be almost featureless moments of experience, which involve in their succession the minimum of jolt and the maximum of continuity. They appear also to drop that local emphasis, that extensivity or spreadoutness, which belongs to every sensation in adult life. Hence the reality to which they answer must be conceived as no more than a shock of some specific type rendered into a mere awakening, a vague awareness of a force other than that of the self. And to this minimum of activity we must deny also those spatial attributes and references which have disappeared from its representation in consciousness. So it is often characterised as just so much mutation as takes place within the minutest fraction of time. This is the atom of Sāṃkhya and Yoga, not a hard and discrete particle that is incapable of further sub-division, but the smallest dose of foreign activity translated into the least defined and most transitory form of sense-presentation.\* The yogī holds that you may be aware of colour which is neither red nor yellow nor any other tint or of taste which you cannot set down as sweet or hot or bitter. To such thoroughly neutral experiences correspond the simplest forms of external reality, forms that lack all but the most elementary distinction, while to the varying combinations of these are due the vivid fulness of sensations, their frequent changes and sharp contrasts.

#### 4. *Yogic realism vs. popular realism and subjectivism*

We should be able now to trace with sufficient precision the line of cleavage between the traditional view of the universe and the yogī's conception of it without confusing his findings with the speculations of the subjectivist. He accepts the traditional view and joins issue with the subjectivist when he says that we find ourselves in a vortex of contending principles which determine our experience in a general way and are not amenable to our control. But facts are hard only to this extent; as any hard-

\* Swāmi Hariharānanda quotes in his *Sarala-Sāṃkhya-Yoga* a couplet which may be paraphrased as follows. They are what may be regarded as merely sound and sight in sounds and sights. They do not cause pleasure or pain or stupor, which are always due to specific determinations of them.

ness other than independence of the knower's mind, any stability or fixedness, it is impossible to ascribe to them. Tradition and common sense err here because they know only bits or pieces of the world and these too so far as the exigencies of practical life require. Could we, however, take a larger view and shake off the incubus of self-interest, we should find a perpetual flux which we break up and mark off as objects more or less 'solid', because such a conception happens to suit our purposes. Thus the notion of the universe as an aggregate of discrete things merely juxtaposed in space or dovetailed in a complex fashion would come to be replaced by that of processes so intimately correlated as to constitute an all-embracing stream of mutations.

Life is, indeed, so full of disappointments because we are apt to take as static forms of reality what are only its transitory emanations. This tendency we owe to the domination of feelings which teach us to expect the continuance of what is agreeable and the elimination of what is repugnant. But the yogī knows that nothing can be constant in the world of knowable objects where an infinite possibility is unrolling itself with the result that what is agreeable today becomes in course of time positively repugnant. So he views with equal indifference things which affect us very differently. And he is confirmed in this attitude by his knowledge of the simplest forms of matter, which cannot appeal to our feelings because the sensations that they give us are mere announcements of something other than the self. But even these are mutable as they well up from the depths of potentiality for a momentary glitter in the light of consciousness and then drop once more in the realms of the undistinguished.

##### 5. *The three strands of phenomenal existence or the guṇas*

The course of the world is not certainly a featureless flux and so the seeds of difference too have to be sought in the nature of reality. We find them in the circumstance that the real is not a homogeneity, but a blend of three different principles in continually changing proportions. In sound atoms, for instance, perceptibility is the dominant factor as activity is in the colour atoms, while they are comparatively feeble in the atoms that appeal to our sense of smell. And as our sensations are due to multiplied stimulation from homogeneous atoms, while our



knowledge of objects originates in the integration of a variety of sensations, it follows that all the diversity and multiplicity that we meet with in the world are traceable to the interplay of the three primordial principles of perceptibility, activity and inertness \* A fundamentally homogeneous reality could not, of course, answer for all the splits and pluralities that are reflected in experience. But the real of Yoga, composed as it is of three different strands, articulates necessarily into an inexhaustible diversity.

You have only to analyse the opposite conception of substance as a static articulation of reality in order to comprehend this theory of mutations. When you define it as a cluster of sensible qualities, you must include among them the qualities that it had in the past as well as those which may appear in future in order to reconcile your belief in its persistent individuality with the manifoldness that it exhibits in the run of time. Thus all its records and possibilities are integrated with its present achievements to complete your notion of it. And as no form of reality suffers annihilation while nothing springs into existence out of the void, you must say that alongside of what you perceive just now there are other features which are not less actual though they happen to be screened from your view. To call these, records and possibilities or to refer them to the past and the future is to offer an unsatisfactory account of them, as the past and the future are but forms or frameworks furnished by your limited mind for a convenient assortment of what you cannot grasp at once. The substance turns out, therefore, to be an assemblage of innumerable qualities, a few only of

\* Dr. Seal uses the terms, essence or intelligence-stuff, energy and mass or matter-stuff to designate them. But intelligence-stuff and matter-stuff are unusual expressions and, therefore, more or less obscure, while mass is suggestive of weight and is at any rate inapplicable in its ordinary acceptation to mental facts, and essence is not sufficiently exact as activity or mutation is as much of the essence of phenomena as anything else. He defines essence, therefore, as that by which they manifest themselves to Intelligence, which again is not very clear though it is quite correct. Lastly, though energy is a familiar expression, yet since even potential energy is, as he himself observes, only the energy of motion in imperceptible forms according to Sāṃkhya and Yoga, the name, principle of activity has been used here. See *The Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus*, pp. 3-4.

which attain that distinctness at any moment which appeals effectively to your senses. Or if you prefer to retain the term 'possibility' to characterise what you have yet to discover and thus translate its existence into a march along the interminable vista of time, you may describe it as an inexhaustible possibility overflowing into endless actuality. And such, indeed, is the real as it appears to us. The ideas of succession, development and decay may be inappropriate in connection with the real as it is in itself. But phenomenal existence can be neither more nor less than a series of perceived mutations

A world so conceived lacks, indeed, the fixedness or 'solidity' which is ascribed to it by unreflecting common sense. But it does not forfeit on that account the objective value which is the central element in every reasonable conception of it. You stress this element on the other hand when you regard it as a dynamic system which is independent of our wills and thoughts. We live, according to the yogī, in a world of activities which prescribe the limits of our experience and over which we have no control, though we may determine by our conduct the kind of activities that we should submit to. Subject to the choice that we are thus able to exercise, sensations are literally thrust upon us, and we translate them into qualities of objects. So we never get beyond the range of movements or mutations, and the static character which we give to sections of them, however suited it may be for our rough and ready methods of dealing with practical matters, prevents us at the same time from looking as far into the distant and the future as the yogī can do. There is, in fact, no mystery about his prescience and insight, as they are obtained by extraordinary concentration on the microscopic changes which we miss because we are not interested in them

We are, indeed, so wedded to the view that answers the ordinary purposes of life that even when we discard the notion of stable things for that of emanations, we reintroduce the discarded element in the form of a more or less 'material' centre of those emanations. But we really convert that centre into an emanation by investing it with the attribute of materiality, *i.e.*, of being perceptible by the senses. Phenomenal existence testifies, no doubt, to a principle of conservation which prevents activity from being waste or introduces law and order in the series of

happenings. And you may, if you choose, call it the centre or inner core because it is never directly perceived. But evidence of its presence is to be found in the fact that all activity is of the nature of pulsation, and so the safest way of characterising it is to say that it is the negation of activity or movement.

Activity then and its opposite are ingredients of the world. But why should we include perceptibility too among them ? The reason is that it is the very essence of a universe or world of objects (*dṛśyas*) to exist in relation to thought. Anything, however, beyond these principles, it is unnecessary to postulate, as all the manifoldness that we find in the universe resolves itself into differences of perceptibility, activity and inertness. A real which has them is, in fact, infected *ab initio* with all the germs of variation.

One may still ask if Yoga is not off the right track in investigating the most obvious and general aspects of sensible bodies with all the reality of their ultimate constituents. A complete answer to this question can be offered only at a later stage of our study. But it may be observed here that analysis does not disclose anything more substantive or more primordial than these. You may dissect complex forms of objective existence into simpler ones; but you can never conceive that the simplest among them is an entity that is itself imperceptible. The chemist analyses their rich variety into a relatively small number of elements, but these elements lend themselves to observation by way of the senses like their most elaborate compounds. Thus while you reject one form of perceptibility after another as transitory and accidental, you must still regard perceptibility of some sort as an inseparable factor of the world of objects. Similarly, though you perceive one mode of activity leading to another, you can never expect to trace any mode of it to something which is not activity, for it is inconceivable how movement may originate in a state of perfect rest. And as regards the principle of conservation you find it in every movement, for movement is always rhythmic or intermittent and so you must set down this too as causeless. It follows that these features persist and are incapable of being resolved into anything more elementary. You notice them wherever there is objective existence and you notice nothing else. So no logic can touch your conclusion

if you characterise the universe as the totality of continually changing formations of these elementary factors.\*

The hesitation to reduce this majestic and enduring home of life to elements so unsubstantial as these is due to our tendency to look for definiteness and fixity of form and feature in the causes of phenomena. This tendency is co-extensive with practical life, where it is abundantly illustrated in the rough and ready way in which we organise the fleeting shows of experience into more or less stable products which we hope to turn to account. Thus when we are told that a house is made of bricks, wood, lime and mortar, we consider it a more satisfactory explanation of its origin than the statement that it is composed of sights, sounds, strains and pressures. And if the enquiry is pressed farther and bricks are traced to clay and clay to loose earth and so on, we still refuse to go beyond minute particles in space called atoms to which we arbitrarily ascribe properties like inertia and indivisibility. To such particles or things we cling because our practical adjustments have taught us that we have a sure hold of reality only when it appears in a form that may be measured and weighed.

So when the yogī tells us that this solid structure of the world is made up of activity or mutation, we ask immediately what it is that is active. To this he would reply that apart from the activity by which bodies change their places, there is another to which they owe their conformation from moment to moment so that an intensive examination of them discloses only restless vortices of change. But the answer does not satisfy us because we are always on the lookout for something 'solid' or stable, something that we may clutch mentally if not physically, while

\* Partial accounts of these primary constituents or *guṇas* (strands) have prevented even competent critics from appreciating the strength of this position. "The Gunas," says John Davies, "are a mere hypothesis, invented to account for the manifest differences in the conditions of formal existences. There is evidently a subtle or spiritual element, one of passion or force, and something which is contrary to both, an element of dulness or insensibility, in at least all human beings; and these are assumed by Kapila to indicate a primary difference in the constituent elements of Nature (*Prakṛiti*)". But he is not quite sure what these elements are as he takes them immediately after to be goodness, foulness and darkness. See *The Sāṅkhya-Kārikā of Iṣwara-Krishṇa*, pp. 37, 38.

pure activity eludes the grasp of ordinary thought. Similarly, when he speaks of a principle of conservation, we enquire what it is that abides. And the mention of perceptibility as the most important constituent of objects provokes a discussion of the ultimate nature of the entity to which it belongs, as if it does not get its full cash value in perception. Phenomena come to us in groups, but the mere fact of their cohesion does not content us and so we furnish a guarantee for it by inventing substances where they might inhere. It is a trick of the understanding, a subjective construction of thought, which till redeemed, remains in bondage to our practical requirements.

The distinction between substance and attribute has, indeed, a certain utility in ordinary life, as it enshrines the familiar experience that some appearances are more general and fundamental than others and that even when they are obscured by changing circumstances they may be recovered by the restoration of their original conditions. Gold appears to be lost in gold chloride and sulphur in sulphide of mercury; yet we can always have them back by breaking up the compounds. But this persistence through change is better expressed by saying with the yogī that an object is only the aggregate of past, present and future attributes than by affirming at the core of it an incognisable entity that holds them together. So instead of understanding by substance a spurious bond, a cement for the support of co-existent and successive appearances, we should take it to denote a form of appearance more general and, therefore, more elementary than the phases or attributes that appear in course of time or under the stress of circumstances. If now in the light of this distinction we examine objective realities, we must accept as primal substance or matter principles which are seen to be most elementary and general. And such are perceptibility, activity and conservation, for they comprehend all that may be found in phenomenal existence. They may appear like abstractions hypostatised, if they are taken as independent and isolated entities. But it is in indissoluble relation that they evolve the world. Perceptibility or the power of appealing to the senses implies activity which, again, springs out of the bosom of repose. At the same time each is fundamental; activity and rest are

correlates, each being the antecedent condition of the other while both of them exist in necessary relation to thought.\*

In fact, any principle more fundamental or real than these, it is impossible to discover. The atom of the materialist or the object apart from its relation to experience and the sense datum of the subjectivist or the mental modification without its unmistakable objective accent are plainly abstractions. So they cannot be the ultimate constituents of objective existence, and the claim of pleasure, pain and stupor to be ranked as such is even more questionable. These have been identified with the yogic principles because pleasure attends clarity of presentation, while excessive activity causes pain and mere conservation corresponds to stupor in the mind. It has been urged also that things are pleasant or painful or indifferent. But hedonic values are not self-subsistent, their proper place being in our experience; and in setting them on objects we follow no general rules, so that the same thing may charm me and disgust another. This subjective character forbids us to regard them as the foundation of the physical world.

Dr. Dasgupta offers a reasoned plea in support of the thesis that pleasure, pain and stupor are the ultimate constituents of the universe, and he cites a passage from *Yoga-Vārttika* to clench it.† The main argument is that cognition has always an emotional accompaniment which becomes more pronounced as the intellectual factor declines or as mental activity approaches material transformation in character. And it points to the conclusion that they have a common origin in elementary feelings which are just outside the pale of consciousness and lack also the grossness or definiteness of familiar forms of matter. This, however, is a new line of reasoning, and he follows his authority more closely when he tries to establish his point by an application of the Sāṃkhya principle that the effect is but the cause revealed. As causation is simply the unfolding of some

\* Dr. Seal, who is obliged by the scope of his subject to import in his exposition terms and ideas that belong properly to physical science, is yet unequivocal in the statement that these *gunas* are substantive, though not self-subsistent, being 'interdependent moments in every real or substantive existence.' See *The Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus*, p. 3.

† See *Yoga Philosophy*, Chapter 3.

latent possibility, he concludes that there can be nothing in consciousness which was not already in its cause and object. So if the latter delights or disappoints us, pleasure or pain must be its constituent in some inchoate form at least. And if its history as recorded in the perceiving mind is a succession of the feelings just mentioned, then all of them must be taken as entering into its composition. But two facts are overlooked here. The perception of the *tanmātras* has no affective tone, and the law in question refers only to material causes while it cannot be pretended that the external stimulation is the stuff of the resulting phenomena in the mind.

6. *They are also the materials of empirical consciousness*

Greater plausibility may be claimed for his attempt to trace the fully developed consciousness to germinal feelings as it is not vitiated by an incorrect application of the Sāṃkhya theory of causation. Still it is a plausibility won by disregarding one of the main lines of the yogi's thought. For however important the role of the feelings may be, it is certainly subordinate to that of cognition in the yogi's psychology, where mental states are so classed as to suggest that relation to an object is their ultimate, irreducible characteristic. He notices, in fact, an immanent objectivity even in psychoses like self-consciousness, sensation and apprehension of the *tanmātras*, while Dr. Dasgupta points out that feelings are devoid of objective reference and finds the beginning of consciousness in their simplest forms, *i.e.*, in forms that are not appropriated by the cognising self or referred to external stimuli. But it is only by a confused and confusing use of the word 'feeling' that these vague and neutral shocks or jars are identified with the well-marked emotional tones of pleasure, pain and stupor.

Dr. Dasgupta adduces facts taken from modern psychology and biology to illustrate his contention, though he observes at the same time that the yogic cosmogony is but a tentative and distant approach to the scientific hypotheses which have been framed after a study of them in the light of the modern theory of evolution. Still the comparison is unfortunate as no two things can be more unlike than the mutation of the yogi and the evolution of the biologist. There is, no doubt, a natural

temptation to regard the former as a kind of evolution; but it must be borne in mind that Yoga discusses the logical grounds and not the temporal conditions of phenomena and closes its genetic account with a scheme of the ultimate factors of experience, while it is only the history of complex reality as punctuated by successive stages of adjustment and growth that the evolutionist seeks to study and explain. The yogi's interpretation of lower elements by those that are higher stands, therefore, on very different ground from that occupied by the investigations of natural history which seek to trace how more and more intricate and stable forms have evolved in course of time and under the stress of circumstances out of others that were not so nicely adapted to their environment. And unless this difference is kept steadily in view, the student is apt to lose his way in the tangle of apparently contradictory conclusions. There is, for instance, a certain measure of truth in the statement of the evolutionist that embryonic feelings can exist before clear-cut perception. But it appears to conflict with the higher position of Yoga that the mind is not a creation at all and that though it suffers resolution at the end of every cycle, yet it springs up at the commencement of the next panoplied like Minerva for a fresh course of activity through light and shade and in all forms of organic existence.

Dr. Dasgupta seems to accept this view where he quotes *Manu-Saṁhitā* and *Viṣṇupurāṇa* to illustrate the point that Hindu thought ascribes a sort of consciousness even to plants and accounts for their apparent lack of sensibility and intelligence by the doctrine that the mind is obscured in them by previous errors and aberrations which are being worked off by suitable experience.\* But instead of setting down the inexact identification of the primordial elements with the feelings in some of the commentaries to the practical trend of Yoga, he sheds a foreign light on it from the mind-dust theory and thus disguises the high metaphysical and spiritual import of the idea that the mind is present as a responsible agent wherever there is life, though sometimes it is so fettered by self-imposed limitations as to appear very much like matter. At the same time he renders

\* See *Yoga Philosophy*, p. 87.



important service to Yoga by his pointed reference to the cardinal principle that the self-same materials are arranged in different patterns in them to provide for the duality of subject and object in experience.

But do we find anything else in the perceiving mind ? It is, indeed, highly mutable; and we hit off its nature with sufficient accuracy when we call it an intensive manifoldness and characterise its complex phenomena as processes rather than objects, since they have not even the semblance of a static character. These processes then have to be examined in order to discover the composition of the mind. And we find in them in the first instance thoughts, sentiments and resolves which the individual feels that he owns even more completely than his material possessions. So they are objects like the things around him with, of course, a shade of difference, which cannot be construed, however, as an admissible claim to separate classification, for it consists only in their being more intimately and thoroughly known. Hence perceptibility is a feature or ingredient of the mind as it is of external objects, and it is, in fact, more conspicuous here than it is in them.

The next thing that we note is sequence or rather dynamic succession among these mental states, without which they would not be processes. When we perceive or think, we feel that we act and that a series of ideas is the outcome of such activity. Thought and activity are then so intimately related as to justify the view that they are complementary aspects of the same fact. We realise also that there is an unconscious concomitant of this conscious becoming. Mental facts are observed to rise up to the surface of consciousness and to sink into the depths of nescience after floating there for a brief spell of time. Thus thought is intermittent like activity, and one does not see why they should be so unless they are broken up by an antagonistic principle. Sleep testifies unmistakably to the nature of this principle as well as stupor, since in both the powers that are ordinarily active are chained up, though not actually destroyed, with the result that knowledge too is at its lowest ebb in them.

Our conscious life has been aptly compared to the oscillations of a pendulum in a recent treatise on Yoga. The pendulum swings continually between the two extremes of clarity of

comprehension and insentience, and it does not cease to be active though it appears to pause before changing its course. Similarly, sensibility is not completely lost in insentience when a thought or feeling has run its course, for then we could never be cognisant and appropriative of what we have previously experienced. And since we see things always in light and shade, and never have a vision of the complete truth, it follows that our clearest thoughts are cut up or obscured by insentience. The three principles are, therefore, always conjoined in our mental life, though their relative strength varies from moment to moment. In fact, every well-marked mental state bears ample testimony to this conjunction. We have seen that cognition always involves some measure of activity. Conation, on the other hand, starts with some image or idea of a possible movement. And the restricted scope as well as brief duration of both is indicative of the presence of the third factor too. This factor, again, is dominant in retention but without completely suppressing the other elements, for the ability to recall past experiences proves that they shrink only to an unperceived minimum of thought and activity. The internal and external worlds are, therefore, alike in their composition, perceptibility, movement and inertia being in evidence in all their forms and throughout their history. And as anything more fundamental than these cannot be conceived, Yoga regards them as the primal cause of whatever appears or is revealed to Intelligence.

It cannot be denied, however, that though mental facts are perceptible inasmuch as we can reflect on them and determine their nature, yet their significance lies more in perceiving things than in being perceived themselves. Movement, again, among them is not movement in space as well as time, as the latter alone is the vehicle of continuity for them. So strictly speaking, we have sentience, activity and insentience in the mind as against perceptibility, movement and inertness in the world outside it. Is Yoga guilty then of maiming facts to suit a preconceived theory of harmony and unity ? Does it minimise the difference between mind and matter in order to sum up in the simplest and most comprehensive form, obviously divergent facts ?

It would be strange, indeed, if such a suspicion could prove well-founded. Yoga is avowedly pluralistic in its tenor, and its

method is empirical throughout, though the range of experience on which it relies for its conclusions is wider than that of ordinary men. So a passion for simplicity at all costs cannot be one of its weaknesses as it is of systems which take the high *a priori* road and appear to be evolved *in vacuo* to satisfy a well-known craving of the human intellect. And we find as a matter of fact that it duly stresses the difference between the cognising mind (*grahaṇa*) and that which is cognised (*grāhya*). But it holds at the same time that the difference, if we take it at its face value, is never so great as to constitute a scientific warrant for neglecting the striking points of resemblance and the equally striking fact that the gulf between them has been always spanned by experience in spite of the theory that it is unbridgeable.

The abyss that yawns between the two is, indeed, largely a creation of theorists. The assumed passivity of the mind is contrasted, for instance, with the activity that prevails outside it, though it is made up of activity to such an extent that unless you are a slave of words you cannot conceive how it may exist in a quiescent state. A peculiar unity is also ascribed to it though the contents of consciousness change often with a degree of abruptness, an amount of jolt that is incompatible with our idea of a perfect continuum. There is on the other hand such a correlation of processes, such a dovetailing of parts in the external world as to preclude the idea that it is but an aggregate of discrete things. So far then the two words are alike. External objects appear, however, to be set in space as well. But if the elementary psychoses of which sensations are composed are no more than shocks of a neutral character and without local references, then we have no reason for attributing dimension to their causes. And of such causes is the external world ultimately constructed.

### 7. *Concept of space*

How then are we to account for the idea of space as a receptacle in which external objects find their places? We get it with our sensations in the simple form of spreadoutness, and it then develops with the development of our perceptual life. But the original feeling of spreadoutness is itself due to the persistence of images. The causes of sense data knock at the doors of con-

sciousness with such rapidity that a number of them come to be perceived together owing to this persistence. And then what is really a sequence of events is translated into an appearance of co-existence. Could the mind follow their order and keep them sufficiently apart, there would not be this jumble of presentations and the resulting experiences of surface and depth. Thus our notion of space does not represent a reality beyond us. It is a necessity of human thinking, an outcome of human imperfection.\*

But there is more to be explained than the limitless extent of the world, for it is rich also in design and variety like an elaborate tapestry. How then are we to account for this manifoldness if, as just observed, energy without any specific character forms its warp and woof? The answer is that we get it in five different forms from the very outset and that a further diversification results from the combination of homogeneous units. The specific forms that are thus evolved are, in fact, countless, for though they conform to the type in general character, yet differences of detail arise with every variation in the number of units that are integrated. The sensations of yellow and blue answer, for instance, to different combinations of atoms or units of energy, though from their generic similarity we may conclude that the

\* Dr. Seal seems to think that Sāṃkhya and Yoga concede to space a degree of objective reality that is denied to time. "Space", says he, "must be distinguished as *Deśa* (locus or rather extension) and *Dik* (relative position). Space (*Dik*) as the totality of position, or as an order of co-existent points, is wholly relative to the understanding, like order in time, being constructed on the basis of relations of position, intuited by our empirical (or relative) consciousness ..... On the other hand, space as extension or locus of a finite body, *Deśa*, has an ultimate unit, being analysable into the infinitesimal extensive quantity inherent in the Reals (*Gunās*) of *Prakṛti*." But the *Gunās* are constituents of the mind too, and extensive quantity cannot be attributed to it. *Buddhi* is, no doubt, characterised sometimes as *aṇumātra*; but *aṇumātra* in such contexts means only indivisible or dimensionless. Besides, it is impossible to form any idea of space except as an order, however vaguely conceived, of co-existent points. Lastly, there are passages in works on the subject that appear to give the same status to time and space. It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude that the idea of space is, in these systems, a development of the bare notion of externality or independence of the percipient's mind, this externality becoming extension because diverse but rapidly succeeding impressions are felt to be co-existent. See *The Positive Science of the Ancient Hindus*, pp. 21, 22.

mode of activity is the same in both the cases. These different combinations unite, again, with specific forms of other types to create the concrete things and events among which our lives are passed.

We have here a genetic account of things in which qualitative differences are largely resolved into differences of quantity and Nature is represented as making no long leaps to arrive at the rich complexity of the universe. Had Yoga stopped here, it might still have met the requirements of a scientific theory. But it follows up the line of enquiry till it is able to offer a comprehensive statement about the ultimate form and import of objective existence. And this statement has the distinguishing mark of a philosophical interpretation, based as it is on a criticism of the presuppositions in rival systems and of the concepts of practical life.

#### 8. *Objective idealism in Yoga*

Yoga does not discount the unequivocal testimony of perception to a real world outside of ourselves. Nor does it say that we must be always profoundly ignorant of the nature of the world thus testified to. It characterises, on the other hand, as a pernicious heresy the doctrine that whenever you try to get into touch with external reality your own sensations intervene to shut it out. Why, the appearances in consciousness belong to the reality; for how otherwise can it shine forth or, to put it more pointedly, be objective existence? Your knowledge of it is, no doubt, an imperfect picture; but the imperfection is due to the circumstance that the untrained mind mixes up things which are separate and overlays them with certain adventitious factors. So you can always find out the entire truth about it with the aid of philosophical criticism. And in any case, it is never completely screened from your view by an impenetrable wall of private impressions. Such is the contention of Yoga, and it reveals a starting-point which is intelligibly realistic. But from this position it advances by a line of argument which is strikingly original to conclusions which have a clear idealistic ring.

It calls attention to those dim and fugitive psychical states through which we become aware of objective reality in its

simplest and purest form as merely other than or foreign to the cognising self. This alien force has ordinarily a form and colour and setting for us because a number of its manifestations in consciousness get integrated as a specific sensation which we refer back as a quality in it. And the needs of practical life teach us to cut this flux of sensible reality into distinct though diversely related objects, which may be defined as clusters of qualities, known and knowable and persisting in space or alongside of one another. Moreover, since no bounds can be assigned to our experience of them, we fancy that they are set in an illimitable framework which may exist apart from them. But there can be no question that this system of qualities with its framework of space is ultimately traceable to momentary facts or shocks in relation, and its externality to independence of our several wills and desires. Time appears, therefore, to be the sole principle of synthesis for things within and outside the mind. But how then are we to distinguish them in character? They originate, it is true, at different centres. That, however, is not a sufficient reason for investing them with contrary attributes.

Popular philosophy likes, indeed, to look on the world as a system of more or less enduring things packed side by side in space and not as a series or succession of phenomena pressing on from moment to moment. And a scientific veneer is given to the conception by regarding the objects as composed of atoms or indivisible but material and, therefore, extended units, in unwarrantable disregard of the obvious objection that extension, however you may conceive it, involves divisibility. Mental facts alone are known to be inextended or indivisible, and if other facts or modes of existence appear on examination to consist of elements which lack spatial attributes, then there is not much of an excuse for regarding them as absolutely unlike. Such is the position of Yoga, which proceeds from a review of perceptual consciousness to the determination of the nature of the reality revealed in it. But those who dally with philosophical problems prefer to regard matter and mind as separate spheres which, in spite of innumerable points of contact, differ radically in cast and composition. This dichotomy, however, of objective existence and subjective fact falls to the ground as soon as a

resolute attempt is made to understand the phenomenal world as a whole and not merely bits and pieces of it.

Besides, no matter how much we concede to this half-hearted materialism, we cannot blink at the fact that material objects are never complete in themselves. Perceptibility is their most important ingredient or feature. So there is always a point where their so-called physical character is absorbed or changed into a state of consciousness. They are, indeed, less directly known than our feelings and thoughts. But the minds of our neighbours are even more remote from our consciousness than they, and yet we never think of giving them a different character on account of this remoteness. Why then should we regard the world as differently constituted ? The commonest way of marking off its physical character is to say that it is occupied space. But this last line of demarcation disappears when space vanishes as we analyse it into its elements. On the other hand, it exists only in so far as it is known or knowable. In fact, we can form no notion of it without presupposing the presence of a mind by which it is cognised.

#### 9. *Concept of time*

But should we not concede to time greater independence and reality than we allow to objects and events? The popular idea of it combines, indeed, the notion of a receptacle capacious enough for all events with that of a principle which links them to one another in a certain order. There is also the subsidiary conviction that since events are always in time, it existed before their appearance and must continue to exist after the series of finite happenings has come to a close. But to the earliest event that a man knows or hears of, he immediately furnishes an antecedent, while what appears at first to be the last turns out always on second thought to be the last but one, so that time is never able to transcend the world of facts. When, therefore, he assumes that there must be a receptacle for the succession of events, he extends to the totality of things what is true of them only in detail. He is right, no doubt, when he says that every event within his experience has an antecedent and a consequent. But he contradicts himself when he concludes that the aggregate of events must be enclosed by something outside them.

Experience, again, gives him no more than a succession of phenomena, and in all their wealth and variety he cannot discover a principle which chainwise binds them to one another. So he obscures, instead of interpreting a patent fact, by introducing the concept of an independent principle of synthesis. The broad divisions of time are future, present and past. But since the future is yet to come, it cannot stand in any relation to what is before him. Similarly, priority to the present cannot be claimed for the past, for it is not real enough to be related. Besides, what is the extent of the present? If he says, it is infinitesimally small then the reply is that there is no such measure. The components of this superior entity dissolve themselves, therefore, into mere nothingness under the distinguishing eye of thought. Man's knowledge of duration, again, is extremely relative, being conditioned always by the circumstance in which he is placed. And when he tries to picture it as a form independent of phenomena but capable at the same time of providing ample room for all of them, he assumes something which belongs admittedly to empirical existence and is yet not amenable to verification! A limitless container is, in fact, not only unnecessary but even inconceivable. Limits, we understand having had ample experience of them, but experience does not vouch for the total absence of limits, nor can it be adequately presented to the mind in imagery.

The genesis of this complex and loosely strung concept is to be sought in the use that we make of language. Ideas conveyed by words are, according to Yoga, divided into those that represent facts correctly, those that are misrepresentations of the truth and lastly those that do not claim to represent experience and are, therefore, neither true nor false. The second are rejected as soon as they are challenged and exposed. But the third have a longer lease of life and are often widely current owing partly to their neutral character and partly to the circumstance that they may be valuable aids in the discovery and exposition of truth. Such are many terms with a negative implication\* like

\* There can be, in strict truth, no negative element in knowledge itself, its conditions being fully satisfied only where something is comprehended positively and clearly. But the cognitive process may be regarded as negative where it fails to arrive at a definite or correct result and thus testifies merely to the weakness of the intellect in certain directions.



infinity, eternity and absolute want. And such is also time as well as space, for in time succession and the facts that succeed one another, duration and the objects that endure are mentally separated. But the artificiality of the conception comes to be lost sight of when with the morbid growth of abstract thought men acquire the habit of taking words for things. And then they scout the idea that beyond the facts there is nothing, and since they cannot get to the last of them by the boldest sweep forward nor recover the first by glancing back, they conclude that time, their supposed container, must be both beginningless and endless.

The truth about it is forcibly summed up in the *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* in a short sentence, which may be translated as follows : "This time is not a reality, but is created by the understanding and established on the meanings of words. Yet to the distracted judgment of ordinary men it appears to be real."\* In other words, it is not intuited or perceived by the senses; but the belief in its reality is almost a subjective 'custom, because the concept and its verbal sign prove useful in speculation and practical life. There are many other scientific terms of the same nature; but the artificiality of their construction is less obscured because they have not that wide currency and utility which belong to 'time' and 'space'. Time furnishes, indeed, a common denominator for all sorts of facts, internal as well as external. But the service that it renders to thought must not blind us to the likelihood of its proving a dangerous asylum for vagueness and confusion unless there is a frequent reference to the basis of the concept in concrete reality or, to put it more precisely, in the elementary fact of succession among phenomena.

In fact, even this corrective may mislead if things are conceived as cut-and-dried facts marked off clearly from those that precede and follow. Every object is a series of events with no break or intermission between them or as it is tersely put in the *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, "all things have their minutest parts changing continually."† Hence it is by a rule of thumb, good enough for all ordinary purposes of life, that the antecedent is distinguished

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, III. 52 and *Bhāṣvati*, III. 13.

† See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, III. 53 and *Bhāṣvati*, III. 15.

from the consequent. Strictly speaking, movement or rather activity is the essence of reality and not merely an occasional phase of it. So you cannot, from the standpoint of the philosopher, cut sections in it though you find it to your interest to discriminate as objects and their relations what is after all a continuous stream or flow of *perceived mutations*.\*

Here then we have the identity of the real and the ideal. But it is as far as anything can possibly be from subjectivism. Yoga never loses sight of the fact that the events which make up an individual's mental life have a common stamp impressed on them, the stamp, namely, of being internal. This subjective centrality of experience, this mystery of a peculiar synthesis serves to differentiate it from the world that is experienced. But your experience is differentiated from mine in the same way, as the former can by no conceivable process be translated into the latter. So this separateness cannot by itself be a scientific warrant for ascribing an extramental character to external reality. On the other hand, the mere circumstance that it speaks to mind may be taken as evidence of similarity of character.

#### 10. *Hiranyagarbha and the order of the world*

Yoga seems to approach the problem from various angles and to find facts of every description quite in accord with the doctrine that whatever we know is in the deepest sense mind. And yet it denies mind-dependence to objective realities on the ground that they are neutral as between several cognisers. The two positions are reconciled by asserting the existence of a Being who is able by mere willing to initiate similar states of consciousness in different individuals. He thus creates the general

\* Compare the following clear and concise statements of Dr. Seal, which would have been complete if he had stressed the part played by language and our practical instincts in the development of the concept "This time-series, then", says he, "is a schema of the understanding for representing the course of Evolution. The schema of the understanding supervenes on the phenomenal world, and hence in the empirical consciousness the time-series appears to have an objective validity and to form a continuum". And he observes elsewhere that "the empirical intuition first superimposes relations of antecedence and sequence on changing phenomena (the evolving *Gunās* or reals), and the understanding out of these relations creates order in time". See *The Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus*, pp. 19 & 22.

conditions under which they live and work out their several destinies or gives them the broad and bold lines of their experience which they must fill in for themselves.

Creation is thus the objective revelation to us and for us of what is mind in its ultimate reality. Mechanical principles carry us only half way towards an explanation of it, as the potency of every form of existence lies in its perceptibility or fitness for entering into an experience. In fact, Nature overflows with this purpose or adjustment in every part of it, and the significance of this purpose is in no way attenuated by the universal sway of mechanism within its limits. Mechanical principles are, on the contrary, rightly interpreted when they are regarded as constituting the scheme or order which appears in the translation of the will of the Cosmic Spirit into sensations and feelings in inferior creatures. For it is inconceivable how directionless energy and self-subsistent mass can convert themselves into experience. And it is more reasonable to conclude that mind speaks to mind without the aid of a mystifying interpreter or intermediary and thus to conceive of external reality in terms of the only reality that we directly know.

So instead of a world of objects called into existence at some remote period and left behind in inconceivable isolation for individuals to stumble upon occasionally and accidentally, we have the spectacle of a world or field of activity and experience perpetually unrolling itself in each of us owing to the activity of a kindred though immeasurably superior spirit. Sāṅkhya compares the process to magic. The extraordinary sights and sounds with which the magician entertains us disappear as soon as his performance is over, and we realise then that they had no actuality, no objective existence apart from his will. Such, indeed, is creation, being neither more nor less than revelation to intelligence by intelligence. But while the object of the magician is limited and particular, the expression of the Divine Will as universal and seemingly endless order has the beneficent result of unfolding whatever is latent in us or rather of securing for each and all the conditions of a growing fulness of existence and ultimately of emancipation.

We may, if we choose, designate as the Creator the Being who

is actuated by this purpose.\* But the name must not be allowed to suggest that He is far from any of us or that His creation intervenes now as a virtually independent entity between Him and ourselves. If, therefore, He appears to be hidden behind a dazzling mist of phenomena, it is because our attention is so distracted by their diverse affective character as to miss the significance of their totality. But could the scales of a narrow practical interest drop from our spiritual vision, we should see them not as self-subsistent things variously related to one another but as the sustaining and stimulating acts of a Power not unlike what wells up in us in the form of self-consciousness and its developments.

He differs then from us in the compass of His understanding and the effectiveness of His will. And this superiority He owes to a complete knowledge of the course of Nature acquired in a previous cycle and transmuted in the present into perfect identity with its processes. Hence He is co-extensive with every movement in the external world and consubstantial with all that appears to be static in it. Whatever was or is or is to come is but an expression of His will. Just as our imperfect knowledge enables us to control in some measure the forces of Nature, so His thorough acquaintance with her ultimate principles, makes it possible for Him to shape them according to His will, which again, is always in accord with the needs of self-realisation of inferior beings. True, high as are the heavens above the dark and narrow corners which we severally occupy and work in, so high are the achievements of this exalted Spirit above what we manage to accomplish for our petty ephemeral objects. But it is, after all, a difference of degree, and there is no real incomprehensibility about the process by which superior intelligence wedded to a perfect will manifests itself in the evolution of the universe.†

As just observed, we too are creators in our petty spheres. Our impulses and resolutions take shape as facts for our neighbours and friends. And the effectiveness of such facts depends on the

\* The yogic name of this Deity is *Hiranyagarbha* or the Being whose essence or inmost nature is the brightest knowledge.

† This process is called *vairābhīmāna* or expression of the self of the Great One as a not-self.

strength of our will and the sweep of our knowledge. Higher creatures are thus found to lay down the conditions under which those who are inferior to them sometimes live and work. And the extent of their influence is commensurate with the degree of their freedom from narrow, contracted motives. The Creator, however, is completely free from them; He knows the world thoroughly and so has nothing to expect from it. But His knowledge of its life as acquired in a previous cycle works itself out in concrete shapes in the present. There is, indeed, no reason why it should not, as it appears less unreasonable to regard mental facts as the causes of 'material' changes than *vice versa*. But the truth is that causation is a possibility either way, since both mind and matter are made of the same stuff. He does not, it is true, create these specific forms, for they arise out of the dateless union of Nature and absolute thought, of which He himself is the most notable outcome just as we are less conspicuous manifestations. But the correlation of the various types of external existence into a cosmic order is unquestionable evidence of an integrating principle like His comprehensive mind. It is due to His constructive energy that we walk along established ways.\*

Yoga describes this cosmic activity as the consummation of self-consciousness, for the self is completely known only when it has been related to all possible objects of knowledge and desire. It is incomplete in us; but every advance, we feel, is consequent on greater knowledge and, therefore, greater control over the forces of Nature. So there is the warrant of experience for the view that perfect mastery over them is the natural and necessary concomitant of a completed self-consciousness. The Being, who has attained it, has *ipso facto* comprehended all forms of objective appearance, and is able, therefore, to reproduce them for the benefit of inferior beings. He has trodden the path that we are still treading; He has explored all that we are yet groping after in difficulty and doubt, and He has surrendered every type of special interest to master all the secrets of Nature. Hence His

\* Śāntaraksita's conception of creation is not unlike this. He says that he is prepared to accept the general statement that the world owes its existence to the conscious activity of gods and men, but that he cannot see how it may be due to the causeless volition of an eternal Being. See *Tattva-Saṁgraha, Prakṛti-Paṭikṣā*, 80-81.

will is in perfect conformity with what ought to be, and it manifests itself in an orderly sequence of events which appeals effectively to our minds. We worship Him, therefore, in His three-fold aspect as Creator, Protector and Destroyer.

### 11. *Īśvara or the Supreme Deity*

THIS World Spirit is not, however, the supreme Deity of Yoga. He has attained, indeed, a seemingly unapproachable level of psychical perfection. But His beginning may have been as unsatisfactory and unpromising as ours, while a similar elevation is not altogether outside the limits of possibility for each and all of us. He presides too over a world full of ignorance and misery, which we cannot associate with what is absolutely good and great. And He is still under an illusion in so far as He identifies Himself with the alien force of Nature and shapes it into a process, which, however beneficial it may be in its ultimate result, is yet marked at every stage by pain and evil. So He has still to shake off the trammels of the finite.

The Supreme Being knows Nature as well as this World Spirit; but He knows it as foreign and mutable and has, therefore, nothing to do with its ever-changing formations. In fact, activity cannot belong to His essence as activity implies some want or ignorance which it is designed to allay, while He is perfection itself. His knowledge is, therefore, not an acquisition; He has always possessed in light what others have gradually discovered by way of ordinary experience or contemplation. Besides, the hidden depths of reality lie bare before Him as well as its transitory forms. But is such omniscience possible? The yogī answers the question in the affirmative. He sees understanding of various grades around him, and he is not prepared to take the particular conditions under which it occurs here as exhausting its possibilities unless you can show that the elements of which it is made are limited in themselves.

Granting, however, that such a Supreme Being is possible, how does Yoga make out that He exists? It refers as a proof of His existence to the body of revealed truths and to the utterances of inspired teachers. They could never have been derived through the ordinary channels of information, though after they had been obtained, reasoning could be largely employed to

illustrate and verify them. Hence they have to be traced to a Being to whom spiritual mysteries are as clear as are the details of perceptual life to us. He communicates the saving knowledge to such as are capable of turning it to account. He rules, therefore, in "the upright heart and pure" and not in the region of objective realities.\*

These are, as we have seen, expressions of another Divine will, which furnishes thereby the conditions of our advance along the high-road of experience. The goal is release from every form of limitation, and it is eagerly sought only after the unsatisfyingness of the phenomenal world has been realised by thorough and repeated trial. The world of sights and sounds turns out thus to be a realm of ends. Even common sense seems to admit as much when it says that in the order which pervades the world there is a meaning which appeals to our understanding. But it assumes that the meaning or purpose has been imposed *ab extra* on a system of things governed entirely by mechanical laws, while the principles of Sāṃkhya and Yoga would lead us to interpret this system in terms of the mind which is the only reality directly known to us. They accept the verdict of common sense that it is external, but they understand this externality as neither more nor less than independence of our minds.

\* The following observations of Professor Radha Krishnan show that he misses the spirit of Yoga. "God is only a particular self (*purusa-viśeṣa*) and not the creator and preserver of the universe. He does not reward or punish the actions of men. But some work had to be devised for him when once he was on the scene. He is said to aid those who are devoted to him in removing the obstacles to their upward progress. ...Such a conception of Īśvara is, of course, unsatisfactory, and we cannot help saying that the Yoga Philosophy introduced the conception of God just to be in the fashion and catch the mind of the public." But though the naturalism of the yogi left no room for a demiurgus and his conception of the moral law did not imply an administrator, it does not follow that a Being who embodied all the excellence that he aspired to attain and sympathised with his highest aspirations would be less real or less intimately related to him and less worthy of his devotion than any fashioner of things and ruler of worlds might be to others. Even Professor Garbe, whom Professor Radha Krishnan quotes to support his opinion admits that this personal God "subsequently determined the character of the Yoga system." See *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 371.

12. *Self-consciousness the basal element in the phenomenal world*

This idealistic interpretation of the yogic cosmogony runs counter to the view that matter and mind are conceived in it as arising out of a common stuff by progressive evolution along divergent lines. But as bare existence is all that is predicated of this basal element, it remains a *terra incognita* in spite of the admission that it is the first of appearances.\* There is, indeed, an obvious incongruity in the conception as a thing must have some form or other in order to appear, while existence is not a form but the mere possibility or logical condition of it. And yet this metaphysical conundrum is put forward as the *raison d'être* of both mind and matter according to Yoga, presumably because it is too amorphous to be definitely classed with either of them. The yogī, however, is far from suggesting that the basal element is featureless when he calls it the unequivocal index of ultimate realities or the simplest and most ubiquitous of facts, which sustains and develops others without losing itself in them. And as his cardinal principle is that phenomenal existence is the outcome of the dateless conjunction of Intelligence with what is eminently fitted to be its objects, he is obviously committed to the position that consciousness is more directly given as an appearance and more indubitably real as such than anything else. But these considerations are left out of account by writers who seek the key to the system in particular expressions without turning to the context and thus miss its full import and character. Yoga, whatever its omissions and inclusions may be, is in one piece, and it is certainly not constructed *in vacuo*, as its main object is to formulate rules of conduct after a careful analysis of the nature and presuppositions of experience. But it has been unfortunate in its commentators, some of whom as belonging to rival schools of thought have not cared much to exhibit its internal consistency and empirical bearing. A capital

\* Dr. Dasgupta says in support of such an interpretation that this "consciousness-stuff" is characterised as *sattāmātra* or as having no other determination than pure being. (*Yoga Philosophy*, p. 181). But the expression is *sattāmātra ātmā* in *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 19 to which he refers, and it may be translated as the self without any further determination or the kind of reality that is expressed by the proposition, 'I exist'. Pure being cannot be predicated of an evolute or appearance without contradiction.



instance of this failure is to be found in their treatment of the present concept, for while the yogī holds that the basis of the majestic and infinitely diversified world of thoughts and things must be real and concrete, they have sublimated it by their partial analyses and verbal distinctions into a pure abstraction which is capacious enough to accommodate all sorts of facts simply because it is contentless and contourless. And modern writers have taken the cue from them so that Yoga appears today like an iron-bound system in which all the wealth and variety of existence are derived from truncated realities by the simple processes of addition and subtraction.

Dr. Dasgupta observes that the confusion had its origin in the circumstance that the parent system of Sāṃkhya shifted its position when it discovered that there was no room for a common ground of objective experience in detached systems of psychosis as individuals and their objects appeared to be.\* So it gave up, in his opinion, an untenable subjectivism for a materialistic conception equally untenable in which everything was mathematically deduced from a cosmic stuff supposed to consist of unfelt feelings.† It is, indeed, almost inconceivable how a philosophy, which based itself on the unquestioned primacy of the mind (*citta*) as the source of experience and the means of deliverance, should have come to derive it from a problematic stuff which could produce mind only because it was not quite matter and matter too because it was not yet mind. The highly significant name of thinking principle (*buddhi*) which it has in Sāṃkhya as well as the functions of defining objects and completing psychical processes which are ascribed to it, would give the lie direct to the view that it was a blank abstraction, if not exactly, a chimera like feelings outside the pale of consciousness. And yet in justice to Dr. Dasgupta it may be said that there are passages in later expositions of the Sāṃkhya which seem to convert this primordial element into a metaphysical skeleton obtained by successive processes of filtration from concrete reality.‡

\* *Yoga Philosophy*, p. 187.

† *ibid.*, pp. 81-83.

‡ Even Dr. Seal seems to lend his authority to this view. His definition of *Mahat* as the "intelligible Essence of the cosmos" gives us the impression

But Yoga at least is no party to this extreme impoverishment or attenuation of the basal factor of phenomenal existence. Nor does it recognise the need of a superficial compromise with materialism to account for the correspondence between subjective states and external facts. The philosopher, who finds it difficult to conceive how mind may act directly on mind, will not find its interaction with an entity held to be altogether disparate more comprehensible, for their assumed exclusiveness cannot be reconciled with any kind of understanding between them. Nor can he hope to get over the difficulty by attempting to trace both to a 'neutral' source, for the lacuna which appears so glaring to him in ordinary experience must always remain a line of cleavage broad enough to prevent an intimate fusion of the two. But the lacuna does not exist for Yoga or even for Sāṃkhya rightly understood, since they regard material objects as groups of qualities with no inaccessible virtuality behind, in postulating which materialism creates the difficulty which it cannot remove.

Yoga accepts *in toto* the Sāṃkhya classification of cosmic realities (*tattvas*) i.e., of facts which are remarkable for their amplitude and persistence. They are consciousness, determinate individuality, the processes that relate it to what is outside and the constituents of the world as realised through them in thought. Since the processes or the types of energy to which they testify are of eleven kinds if we include among them the higher energy that co-ordinates them, and since sense-data may be both subtle and gross and so come under ten different categories, their total number is twenty-three. The subtle and the gross are separately enumerated because while the latter form the staple of

of something vague and vast. But if the interpretation given here is correct, it is by no means vague though its achievements are vast, being co-extensive with space and time. *Mahattattva* is, no doubt, the name generally given to the self-consciousness of Hiraṇyagarbha, which expresses itself in the intelligible world of time and space. But as there is no qualitative difference between His mind and that of ordinary mortals, he who knows his own self fully, as he may do in the *dhyāna* known as *viśokā*, knows the other too. Besides, in the yogic account of evolution, there is no reference to the part played by individuals, the object being merely to set forth the order of appearance of different forms of existence. And in that order, the first place among evolutes is justly given to self-consciousness, even though this self-consciousness is of Hiraṇyagarbha.

ordinary perceptual consciousness, the former too are directly perceived under special conditions. But the highly unstable and complex combinations known as objects are left out of account because reflective analysis discloses nothing in them besides sense-data. This survey is confined, therefore, to the solid rock of concrete experience and its record is exhaustive enough to command general assent.

Closer observation discloses, however, an order of precedence among the facts. Definite personality must be out of the question without consciousness, though consciousness may exist without clear-cut traits or subjective habits that mark off a person. Similarly, the senses and higher faculties must belong to an individual if they are to be in evidence at all; but the absence of any of them does not involve the ruin of individuality. Hence the cosmic order of evolution is first, consciousness of the self as existing without the aptitudes and angularities that mark off the individual and then personality with its determinations and along with these but only as their logical complements or counterparts the faculties that take cognisance of the non-ego which is the objectified will of a Superior Being. Dr. Dasgupta seems, however, to think that objective determination is the first issue of the conjunction of Intelligence with Nature and that it is followed by the appearance of individuality which starts the subjective series.\* But he is not clear about the nature of this objective existence, and all that we can gather from his discussions is that it is midway between consciousness and mass with touches about it that seem to affiliate it to the latter. So the role of this nebular, if not vacuous, reality is to evolve all sorts of definiteness, though in evolving mind as well as matter it must draw from itself more than it contains as an object. But

\* See *Yoga Philosophy*, p. 261. Professor Radha Krishnan thinks that this view is supported by a certain statement in *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II, 19 and so fails to give due credit to the explanation of Vijnāna-Bhikṣu that Vyāsa is enumerating there the slightly specialised evolutes of *Mahat* and not giving the order of precedence among them or suggesting that matter arises directly out of it. That order is unequivocally given in *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, I, 45 where the subtle elements (*tanmātras*) are said to be grounded on individuality. The two observations are certainly not inconsistent, as in accounting for a certain family likeness between B and C, one may say that both are descended from A without implying that they are twins or even brothers.

we search in vain for this problematic stuff among the constituents of phenomenal existence as given in Yoga. And yet luminous thought (*samprajñāna*) about all of them is considered to be the *sine qua non* of that detachment which must be striven for as the sovereign remedy for the evils of life. Self-consciousness is mentioned, on the other hand, as one of the subjects for intensive study and meditation, and the circumstance that it comes after sense-data and mental faculties in the yogī's curriculum points to the conclusion that it is subtler and more pervasive than they.

Certain preliminary observations on the practical aspect of this system are required here for bringing out the full import of this argument, though the subject can be discussed in detail only at a later stage. Yoga holds that empirical existence is based on a misconception and that it spells misery on that account in every form of it. But one cannot by simply willing abolish it, for error breeds error independently of one's will so long as it is not exposed in the light of complete knowledge. And even death is no sure refuge against its relentless activity, for it gives a colour and a bias to human nature which must reappear even under new conditions. So what is needed is that all the essentials of experience should be critically examined and then portrayed in the steadfast mind with more than the immediacy and fulness of perception. For even in perception there is an individual twist, if not also some aberration of the sense-organs concerned, that vitiates the result. It answers, however, for the ordinary purposes of life, especially as a corrective is furnished by the observation of others wherever it is needed. But the misconception referred to is so general and yet so evasive in character that a vague suspicion or even a moral certainty of its presence cannot be enough for its elimination. You catch it effectively only when you acquire a penetrating insight into the nature of the components of empirical existence by contemplation so intense and sustained as to shut out those feelings and impressions that give the tone to ordinary consciousness.

But absorption of this type is possible only in the case of realities that are directly apprehended. Such are the sense-data or, as Yoga puts it, the elements gross and subtle as they appear to consciousness. Such are also the mental processes which are

classed for expository convenience as external and internal functions. But it is possible to observe even more immediately pure consciousness or consciousness of the self as existing without being particularised. So these are brought to focus one after another for literal transcripts that may be spiritually appraised. Beyond them are the ultimate principles of Nature or potentiality for all sorts of appearance and Intelligence apart from which nothing can appear. But these cannot be focused according to Yoga, as they are outside the field of direct observation. So the list is complete without them and it does not include feelings which are supposed to give birth to consciousness. Dr. Dasgupta observes apologetically that in speaking of self-subsistent feelings he is reading the results of modern research into an ancient system which could but vaguely and tentatively anticipate them. But the truth is that the yogī could not palter with a loose fancy or even meddle with scientific hypothesis where his business was to value properly the factors of empirical existence. And if he had the privilege of hearing about feelings that resembled both consciousness and mass or about consciousness-in-general which could split up into a countless multiplicity of individual consciousness, he would have set them down for phantoms or chimeras dressed up speciously in the robes of reality.\*

But self-consciousness stands on a different ground altogether. Its reality is beyond dispute. In fact, it is the fulness of reality while consciousness-in-general is a metaphysical skeleton. At the same time it is purer or less complex and nearer to Intelligence than other concrete appearances. Yoga says that concentration (*samādhi*) on it banishes all troubles and cares, which are due to the vain quest of rest and stability in a perpetually expanding vortex of change. Self-consciousness is intermittent, no doubt, but it is 'the fountain and beginning' of all activity for us. And it has not the confusing variety of the other constituents of experience, while in its purest form it foreshadows a state of unclouded existence. At the same time both subject and object appear in their simplest forms in its glassy essence, and so there

\* Davies shows a clearer conception of the Sāṃkhya principle when he says that Professor Clifford's mind-stuff corresponds to *ahamkāra*, from which this visible universe has developed. See *The Sāṃkhya-Kārikā of Īśvara-Krishṇa*, p. 107.

is room in it for personal experience and its complement of external facts. And since it is the expression of an infinite potentiality, the *yogī* holds that it may unroll as a cosmic order of thoughts and things where it is not crippled as it is in us by original or acquired imperfections. Thus it is the formative energy as well as the stuff of other appearances besides being a patent appearance itself. It is, therefore, quite unlike the unfelt feeling or the unappropriated consciousness which, even if they exist outside the limits of pure abstraction, are yet unequal to the diversity of the effects to be accounted for.

We run the risk of being betrayed by superficial resemblance between the concepts of Yoga and certain generalisations of science and theology unless the distinguishing lines of its thought are kept steadily in view. There is first the elementary caution that the modern idea of evolution is altogether foreign to it, since it holds that complex forms of existence are integrated or embedded in simpler ones which they enrich or illustrate without superseding.\* Personality, for instance, is not a development in time out of an earlier and simpler consciousness, nor have the senses evolved under the plastic stress of a ready-made environment to which life had to adjust itself. The fully equipped mind has been on the scene from the outset like matter. Similarly no caprice of atoms or of a Divine Being is responsible for the appearance of lower organisms just as no accident has caused these to stumble upon consciousness. For they are cases of minds atrophied by an improper use of their powers or aborted by some original but not incurable defect of composition. So far Yoga gives then a logical or necessary connection between facts that are coeval and not an order of succession among them. At the same time, this order is not altogether diagrammatic or geometrical for activity is one of the fundamental principles involved, so that every phenomenon is an embodiment of it.

\* Compare the following statements of Dr. Seal regarding evolution as understood in Yoga and Sāṃkhya "The process of evolution," says he, "consists in the development of the differentiated (*vaśamya*) within the undifferentiated (*sāmyāvasthā*), of the determinate (*viśeṣa*) within the indeterminate (*avīṣeṣa*), of the coherent (*yutasiddha*) within the incoherent (*ayutasiddha*), \* \* \* The order of succession is not from the whole to parts, nor from parts to the whole, but even from a relatively less differentiated, less determinate, less coherent whole to a relatively more differentiated, more determinate more coherent whole". See *The Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus*, p. 6.

A temporal order follows, indeed, in which thoughts and things have their respective places. But it is not necessarily nor always an upward movement, the future of every individual being irrevocably determined by his present and past. Yoga speaks, therefore, of the transformation of individuals and not of species in what may be an interminable series of lives for them. The species is but an abstraction, and natural selection appears to be a determining factor only when the course of events is viewed from outside. The real formative influence belongs to the activity of individuals, which, true to the inexorable law of causation, fulfils itself in their history as continued in life after life. There is no room for the operation of external forces in opposition to it or for the intervention of an external intelligence. Every individual shapes his destiny reaping what he has sown if not here, then it may be in a succession of hereafters. And so his history has more of unity and less of catastrophic occurrences than the accounts which we have of natural phenomena when dissociated from what gives life and meaning to them.

### 13. *Dependence of self-consciousness on Intelligence or Purusa*

The drama then is out and out a drama of the spirit. Yet Sāṃkhya and Yoga deny sensibility to the mind and seem to make out by their morphological account of it that the individual is an ingeniously constructed automaton with a psychical phosphorescence which lights up its activities. Such is, indeed, the impression of Professor Garbe who says that psychological principles have to be translated into the language of physiology in order to be compatible with the pronounced materialism of these systems.\* But the explanation of this apparent incongruity is to be found in their central idea that Intelligence is different from whatever shines forth in its light. We know our minds and observe their activities and achievements. It follows that they are appearances or *objects* of consciousness and as such unconscious (*jaḍa*) like matter. But it follows also that they have no being outside the limits of consciousness, and this is true of matter too, for every thing that is essential in matter is composed of mental facts. Thus the inflorescence of Nature, which is

\* *The Philosophy of Ancient India*, p. 15.

a mere potentiality, takes place throughout in the light of Intelligence, and its evolutes have no other means of winning their way to definiteness and reality. Now if there is a principle in Sāṃkhya and Yoga which is beyond dispute, it is this, whatever disagreement there may be among writers on other points. So where the evolutes appear to be spoken of as objects in their own right, the purpose is only to call attention to the mechanism that there is in thought and conduct or to the causal relation that obtains among external facts.

It is not enough, therefore, to say that Intelligence presides over the universal show and gives it a rational order. Everything in that show is what it appears to Intelligence, having no reality apart from it. But within this world of ideas there are some which are immediately recognised to have a foreign origin, while others constitute our inner life. Or, to put it differently, we feel at every step that the sense-world is forced upon us and that we have to work in it whatever our inclinations may be. Yoga never slurs over or minimises this universal and ineradicable conviction. And so it is far enough from subjectivism. But it is quite as far from materialism, for it explains the independence and externality of the material world by saying that there is a completer Self than our own which expresses itself without any form of compulsion in this majestic and variegated world. We get it direct from Him, *i.e.*, without the aid of incomprehensible intermediaries like things-in-themselves. Such is the yogic conception of the world outside us, and it is certainly realistic though it interprets this world as a system of ideas.

The reality of the world consists then in its being a rational order, which is valid beyond the present moment, valid too for all and fit, therefore, to be reckoned on in our scheme of life. Any materiality other than this, any substantiality greater than what belongs to a system of ideas determined by a superior mind and not amenable, therefore, to our wishes and inclinations, it has no pretensions to. And so we let our practical imagination run away with us when we ascribe a more palpable materiality to it. It appears, no doubt, to be more solid or more resistant than ideas and their sequence. And this unsifted impression is current even in the market-places of scientific thought. But the element of truth in it is that we do not make the world to please ourselves,



but find it too often to our cost to be other than what we should like it to be. Of this attenuated externality two explanations are possible. Subjectivism finds the key to it in the causal nexus between present experience and past, which may not be snapt by our likings and dislikes. But the objective reference in perception is too pronounced to allow the yogi to accept such an explanation. And in the one which he offers, due weight is attached to the conviction of the percipient that his knowledge of objects is circumscribed or defined by forces which cannot be identified with his thoughts and emotions of any time.

The external and internal worlds, are, therefore, eccentric but alike at the same time in composition. There is no perception that is not owned by or referred to some individual, some 'I' or self. And there is no object of it but must be traced to the consciousness of a superior Being which furnishes public fields of activity and enjoyment. So the centre of gravity shifts even for the perceptual elements of space and time to self-consciousness, which comes in consequence to be the common ground of the two forms of phenomenal existence. Through it we think everything else, and in its scheme are cast even the atoms (*tanmātras*) of this world, which appears so overwhelming in its vastness and endless in its possibilities. In its simplest form, self-consciousness is the perception of existence as an individual, and as it develops, it relates other things to the individual thus disclosed. But those things too must be the thoughts of some other conscious Being who gives them to us as the conditions of our existence.

Yoga characterises Ahaṁkāra as the principle of determinateness from the cosmic point of view, because through it an indefinite potentiality comes to be transformed into the definite and elaborate heterogeneity of the world which, though made up of hard facts, has no surer foundation than the mind of the Creator. But with reference to the experience of inferior creatures, it is described as the final and decisive stage in every mental process because through it the mutations in the world outside are absorbed and changed into subjective phenomena. Either way, however, it is but a process in Nature, even though it is the fundamental process both in the sphere of external reality and in the inner sphere of our experience.

But if both the inner and outer worlds have evolved out of this matrix of self-consciousness, why should it not be regarded as the ultimate reality ? We have seen that there is a speciousness about it which invalidates its claim. It shines with a reflected light and poses as the recipient of experience though it is itself a part of that experience. But all the same it must be regarded as the primary fact in the phenomenal world, 'the fountain and beginning' of all that appears. For the mind must remain an enigma, an unexplained excrescence in every attempt to trace all sorts of appearance to something more amorphous or more like matter. Matter, on the other hand, is found to consist of mental elements like sights and sounds, so far as it is an object of experience. There is, no doubt, the broad and universally recognised distinction between knowledge and its objects. But Yoga does not, like subjectivism, deprive this distinction of every vestige of meaning since it traces the sights and sounds that are obviously controlled developments of our self-consciousness to similar phenomena in another Mind which is capable of influencing ours.

The mystery of the world, is therefore, through and through a mystery of ideas, according to Yoga. It should be noted that the senses and higher faculties are classed by it with objects of perception as parts of the spectacle and that the mind is declared to be insentient.\* The statement has lent colour, indeed, to the view that the mind as we know it has developed in time out of unconscious materials, according to this system. But its dual character throughout is stressed by the observation that the basal element of self-consciousness is the index (*liṅgam*) of two antithetical principles, one of them being responsible for all that is objective, finite and mutable in consciousness, while the other is Intelligence or the principle of awareness. Perceptibility cannot become perception of itself, and so the mind which contains both of them must be composite in character. If, however, its claim to be regarded as the ultimate reality must be rejected on this account, still more questionable are the credentials of matter, since so far as it is appearance there must be something else to

\* See *Yoga-Sūtra*, II. 18 and Vyāsa's comment. See also *Sāṃkhya-Sūtras*, I. 126 and I. 132-135.

which it appears. Yoga is, therefore, frankly dualistic in spite of its idealism and it holds that monism of every type suffers from limitation of outlook and enquiry if not also from some confusion of thought.

But why should not Intelligence be regarded as the *res completa* of which every self-conscious individual with his objects is a partial emanation ? Yoga does not accept this view because it cannot see how the partiality comes in. Intelligence, properly conceived, is immutable (*apariṇāmī*) uncompounded (*śuddha*), undefined by other things (*ananta*) and averse to an organic or intimate relation with them (*apratisaṃkrama*). There is no reason, therefore, for the emergence from it of transitory and limited states of consciousness characterised by effort and bounded by insentience. The material must come from some other principle which is capable of rhythmic alternation of growth and decay. The mind, again, is an object of observation in all its forms and aspects and so cannot observe itself though it seems to do so. And it changes with every great variation in the contents of experience so that it is both malleable and receptive or very unlike the enduring and unchangeable Intelligence of which it is said to be the manifestation. But is Intelligence of this absolute type possible at all ? Yoga contends that it is more than possible, being absolutely necessary, since phenomena presuppose, besides the entity that appears, some other principle to which the apprehension of these appearances is due. We cannot, indeed, guess in the ordinary way or within the duality of experience what this principle of awareness may be like. But the slightest reflection will show that it must have a truly independent existence if there is to be any appearance at all. For that which determines or defines all other things cannot in its turn be defined by any of them.

#### 14. *Nature or Prakṛti*

As regards the other principle, it is the equipoise of perceptibility, movement and inertness, which, we have seen, are the ingredients of the phenomenal world. In other words, it is energy locked up in the embraces of that which prevents manifestation. This inarticulate energy starts into life and movement when associated with impersonal thought since what is perceptible or

potentially an object of knowledge comes in consequence of the association to be perceived, the development involving the crystallisation of the amorphous compound into the cogniser and the cognised. These are the ego and the non-ego in their simplest forms at the outset; but further developments follow as a matter of course with this as the basal distinction, for the ingredients are inexhaustible and they combine and recombine in everchanging forms.\* It is the history of becoming, the course of the phenomenal world. The upsetting of the balance among the primordial elements in the manner indicated above starts it; and once it has been started, it has an eventful history marked by fits of alternate depression and effort because those elements are so related to one another as to be continually striving for mastery among themselves. Hence knowledge, activity and lethargy predominate by turns in individual consciousness. But could the equilibrium be restored by a dissolution of the partnership between the two ultimate principles, all becoming would cease and there would remain a mere potentiality. This would be Nature pure and simple, existing in dead independence, the mothersoil of the infinite richness of the world and of its untold possibilities, but incapable without the vivifying light of thought of producing the tiniest thing in it.†

Our conception of Nature has to be modified, therefore, so as to comprehend both the worlds. It cannot be objective being

\* The creative fact of association with Intelligence is ignored by Śāntaraksita when he asks how unconscious Nature can bring forth a variety of objects to satisfy the craving of Intelligence for experience, and adds that it must be unreasonable to assume that Nature is capable of building up objects of experience but incapable of experiencing them.—*Tattva-Samgraha, Ātma-Parīksā*, verses 299-300. It should be noted that the craving for experience is not of Intelligence but of Nature as transformed into an ego in the vivifying light of Intelligence.

† Davies misses this point because the all-important fact of *samyoga* or association is just referred to and not discussed at length in the *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā*. To the question, how Nature begins to work, he answers that Nature has constituents which are originally in equilibrium and that activity commences when their equipoise is disturbed. But this disturbance is the primal activity for which an explanation is required. And the explanation is to be found in the beginningless conjunction of Nature and Intelligence on account of which activity has no beginning in time. See *The Sāṃkhya-Kārikā of Īśvara-Kṛṣṇa*, p. 106.

or externality in the ordinary sense but must be conceived as the elemental and unconscious existence out of which stream both individuals and their objects.\* At the same time as actuality belongs to these alone, the proper way of defining it is to say that it is the possible or the potential and incommensurate, therefore, with whatever is got in the way of experience. But our modern way of thinking can rarely resist the temptation of attributing to it some form, vague and vast as that of space and some movement impalpable like that of time if not more pronounced. But appearance and movement are not potentialities, nor even necessary developments of potentiality.

#### 15. *Conjunction (Sāmyoga) of nature and Intelligence*

Yoga concludes, therefore, that two principles are in conjunction in the evolution of the cosmos.† Becoming or manifestation belongs to one of them, while the other is responsible for awareness of that becoming. How old is the conjunction? No date can be assigned to the commencement of the world, and it is stark nonsense to speak of objects as existing without subjects. So the union must be regarded as beginningless. The principles themselves are consequently ultimate, and they appear on examination to be radically different, since ceaseless mutation, continual flux is the expression of Nature as revealed in the cosmos, while no form of change or activity can be regarded

\* It is, therefore, much more comprehensive and real than matter as conceived by the scientist. Huxley gives us the concept when he asks rather petulantly what this terrible matter may be besides a name for the unknown and hypothetical cause of our consciousness. See *Lay Sermons*, p. 142. Unknown (*avyakta*) it is, no doubt, but some idea of it may be formed from the character of its expressions.

† Sāṃkhya and Yoga recognise causes of two different kinds, viz. material and efficient. The difference between them is illustrated by Swāmi Hariharānanda in the following way. A lump of clay is the material cause of a pitcher and the potter its efficient cause. Of the potter's body the material causes are the five elements while the efficient cause is the understanding which builds it up. Of the understanding, again, the material cause is primal Nature and Intelligence the efficient cause. Thus the ultimate material cause of the inner and outer worlds is Nature and the ultimate efficient cause is Intelligence. Or to put it otherwise, Nature is the stuff of which all things are made, but they owe their specific forms to Intelligence. See *Bhāsvatī*, I. 24 foot-note.

as entering in the make-up of awareness, pure and simple. How came they then to be conjoined ? It is impossible to answer this question, because no matter how far back we travel in time, we never get to the beginning of the show which results from their union.

Dr. Urquhart asks why they should unite at all when it is the interest of both that they should keep apart. And he observes that phenomenal existence must be condemned as a futility if their separation is the end to be achieved. But of this timeless union no teleological explanation can be offered just as no explanation is ever asked or offered of the existence of mind and matter in their original forms. In fact, it is an anachronism to talk of purpose and design with reference to it, when it is responsible for the appearance of the highest beings. So, instead of quarrelling about its reasonableness, we must try to get rid of it, if it proves the beginning of our woes. The way of escape is not, of course, by preserving our miserable experience in some form as an essential ingredient of our perfection but by dropping it out at the end as a needless appendage. But we have to use it in spite of its imperfections as a torch to light us on our way, before we are in a position to throw it overboard. So it is not quite the futility that Dr. Urquhart assumes it must be because it will have to be given up ultimately.\*

He observes also that Nature cannot be the source of evil and the means of deliverance at the same time, that the two aspects of friend and foe are inconsistent. But we have to accept it as an ally so long as we require to be taught in the school of experience. Our lessons in this school are, no doubt, often painful; but they have an educative value, because we have to learn what we ought to eschew. So Nature speeds us in the long run on our onward march unless we perversely misinterpret its warnings.

Exception is taken also to the ascription of desire and benevolence to Nature, which is *ex hypothesi* unconscious.† This is an old charge as Rajendra Lal Mitra met it fifty years ago by quoting Cudworth who says that Nature 'acts neither by

\* *Pantheism and the Value of Life*, p. 363.

† *Ibid.*, p. 360.

knowledge nor by animal fancy, neither electively nor blindly but must be concluded to act fatally, magically and sympathetically'.\* There is, indeed, an inherent sympathy between Nature as perceptibility and Intelligence as the source of all perception. But he might have added that the operations of Nature, which the critics have in view, are always informed by Intelligence, since potentiality never acts by itself. One of the first lessons that Yoga has to teach is the primacy of self-consciousness in the inner and outer worlds of actuality, and to self-consciousness, impulse, desire and design are certainly not foreign.

This is how Dr. Urquhart's remarks must be met from the position that he takes up. But it is necessary for the sake of precision to observe that the selves or souls of which he speaks are manifestations of Nature as much as the objects that are ordinarily assigned to it. It is Nature that wants to set its house in order. To it belong the effort and the subsequent disenchantment. Intelligence can never be other than what it is, nor is it liable to spells of activity and exhaustion. So it is hard to conceive what purpose Intelligence may have or to what far-off goal it must move to accomplish itself. Our conscious life is, on the other hand, the embodiment of mutation. Every single fact in it is like the billow which emerging out of a trough attains its maximum height and then subsides to be lost in the next trough while the entire series is like a variegated show in which no two figures are exactly alike. So Intelligence and the details of our conscious life are very different from each other in spite of a certain likeness between them.

Dr. Urquhart's observations are discussed here at some length because his study of Indian systems is prompted by a genuine desire to find out what is of permanent value in them. He is prepared to give full credit for what appears to be original in their findings, and though he cannot accept their conclusions, his criticism exhibits always a spirit of moderation that is highly commendable if not also very rare. So his opinions should be worthy of every respect. But his estimate of Sāṃkhya and Yoga is based almost exclusively on Īśwara-Kṛṣṇa's *Kārikā*, which, in spite of its high authority, is not always an adequate guide

\* *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali*, Preface lx.

through the subtleties of these systems on account of the figures of speech and the aphorisms in which it abounds. In fact, a vast literature has grown up around this short poem of seventy-two verses for proper elucidation or development of what is enigmatic in its statements. Dr. Urquhart does not turn to that literature for assistance, and so it is not strange that he loses his way among apparent inconsequences and contradictions.

The following may be taken as illustrative of his difficulty. He says on the authority of the sixtieth verse that Nature is generous beyond measure as it expects no return for the services that it renders.\* But the sixty-second and sixty-third verses should have told him that there is no occasion for benevolence as Intelligence does not need mending or treatment and that all the services are, therefore, self-regarding. They aim at the expansion of empirical life or at freedom from its worries and troubles, both of which are ends for the individual, who is the central thing in the world of appearances. So there is some confusion in the statement that "the soul is bound up with *prakṛti* and erroneously thinks that this bondage must continue and that the consequent miseries are inevitable."† And a similar confusion appears in the inference drawn from the comparison of Nature with an artiste, that its benevolent service has no other end than the present delectation of the soul. The soul, as he calls it, is imperturbable, indifferent to the joys and sorrows of life (*udāsīna*) and umpire-like (*mādhyastha*) but only in the sense that the show cannot go on without its presence, though till towards the close of the show it *seems* to be the agent while Nature *appears* to be conscious in its own right.‡ So the similitudes to which there is pointed reference in Dr. Urquhart's work are meant to be our first lessons in the school of wisdom, lessons that cannot give us all that may be known about the soul or about the trend of Nature's activities unless supplemented by other observations.

The word 'soul', has associations which are apt to mislead in a study of these systems. And certain statements of Dr. Urquhart lead us to suspect that the associations cling even

\* *Pantheism and the Value of Life*, p. 361.

† *ibid.*, p. 359.

‡ *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* verses 19 & 20.



where the word is dropt. In commenting, for instance, on Satis Chandra Banerji's observation that the world-process is dependent on Intelligence in Sāṃkhya, he says that no satisfactory explanation is given of the emergence of self-conscious life out of it. But no genealogical tree could be provided, as Intelligence has no modes or mutations by which it may be intimately related to other things. It cannot be a process or the agent in any process, though apart from it process or succession of determinate facts must be impossible. Sāṃkhya and Yoga proceed very cautiously in the quest of ultimate principles, avoiding speculations as far as possible. They find that our conscious life testifies to the presence of Intelligence, without which it could not be what it is. They find also many things in it that are not of the essence of Intelligence and from which Intelligence could not have sprung. They see no reasons for holding that it is more homogeneous in its highest manifestations. And so they conclude that the ultimate reality of Intelligence cannot be identified with any of them, but that it may have a separate existence in spite of the compositeness that is found everywhere.

The foreign elements that are associated but not intrinsically connected with it are called *Prakṛti* which is translated as Nature. But here too associations mislead. Dr. Urquhart says that Sāṃkhya is a strange compound of materialism and idealism with materialism as the dominant element.\* Materialism, however, is a very unsatisfactory word today, as the concept of matter is on the anvil for being fashioned and refashioned to suit the latest discoveries of science. So it would have been more correct to say that Sāṃkhya and Yoga are dualistic in spite of their idealism. They resolve the system of things into a system of ideas but regard ideas as objects, changeful, transitory and open to observation as they are. And they contrast the static perfection of Intelligence with this objectivity, this otherness, which appears always in consciousness and is seen to be a feature even of the empirical ego. But the contrast brings out their relation too, for objects have no existence other than as appearances. The world-process is dependent, therefore, on

\* *Pantheism and the Value of Life*, p. 359. It is stated elsewhere (p. 365) that the tendency towards idealism is an inconsistency within the system.

Intelligence and must lapse into a mere potentiality when divorced from it. That potentiality is primal Nature, which achieves nothing by itself, but succeeds by virtue of the association in burgeoning as a multiform otherness which comprehends the inner and outer worlds.

How then are we to understand this fact of association ? We have discussed it already. But the yogī points out that a clear comprehension of it is possible only when instruction (*śravaṇa*) and reasoning (*manana*) have been supplemented by intense meditation (*nididhyāsana*). It is difficult, indeed, to grasp and still more difficult to explain, since the flexibility of language proves a snare where words relating to experience have to be applied to things that make experience possible. So all that can be said is that it appears as a dateless fact in self-consciousness where the two principles are identified in a common expression and whereon all other kinds of empirical consciousness and, therefore, of phenomena are based.\* This is, indeed, an enigmatical way of defining the relation, for one of the principles lives in expressions, while the other, as the condition of every form of them, is never an expression itself. But any attempt at greater precision in defining it entangles us in fresh difficulties for reasons already given. The fact remains, however, that they are united in spite of their dissimilarity and it is unreasonable, after all, to ask why they are united and how, questions like these being relevant only about phenomenal events in time.

The cosmic movement starts then with the appearance of mind in the form of self-consciousness, if that can be said to start which never had a beginning.† Mind, again, is coincident with life, simple forms of consciousness answering to simple

\* See *Sūtra* I, 4 and comments.

† The nature of this ideal creation is missed by Davies when he says that it is incomprehensible how unconscious Nature can act for the distinct purpose of freeing the souls of men. And he adds that Kapila discards ultimately the concept of unconscious matter and endows Nature with all the qualities of a self-conscious individual. See *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā of Īśvara Kṛishṇa*, p. 95. But his text should have convinced him that it was not an afterthought as distich 21 says that the universe arose out of the conjunction of Intelligence and Nature. The *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* leaves it there. But Yoga develops the idea when it says that the cosmos is the expression of the Divine Will, while everything else is due to the activity of inferior creatures, so that there is nothing which is unconnected with consciousness.

forms of it. That life is a wider fact than mind is, according to the yogī, a psychological myth based on the assumption that all minds must be similar to ours in activity and expression. The truth is that whenever anything separates itself from its environment and exploits the latter for its maintenance and growth, there we have both mind and life or an ego separating itself from a non-ego. The consciousness of the distinction may be dim and the urge of instinct or something lower still may do duty for the desire for self-realisation. Still in the presence of a special purpose, implicit though it be, and of activities converging towards its attainment with a sort of compelling force, we have the distinctive feature of both mind and life or, in other words, of individual existence.\*

#### 16. *The Individual*

The orders of individual existence are countless, and so are the creatures in each of them. And in each creature we have the mixing up of absolute thought which is immutable and

\* Physical imagery dominates to an extent that is almost misleading in Dr. Seal's exposition of the cosmic process as conceived in Sāṃkhya and Yoga. "Evolution begins", says he, "with the disturbance of the original equilibrium. How this is mechanically brought about is not very clear. A modern expounder of the Sāṃkhya supposes that the particles of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas possess a natural affinity for other particles of their own class, and that when the transcendental influence of the Purusha ends the state of arrest, the affinity comes into play, breaks up the uniform diffusion, and leads to unequal aggregation, and therefore to the relative preponderance of one or more of the three *guṇas* over the others. Thus commences formative combination among the Reals, and consequent productive activity." Here we have practically the classical atomic theory restated with the addition of a reference to an incomprehensible momentum furnished by a transcendental entity. Vijñāna-Bhikṣu is Dr. Seal's authority for the account, though he too speaks elsewhere of the *Guṇas* as if each of them was but a class name for a countless number of similar particles diffused through space, apparently ignoring his own statement that self-subsistence or independence cannot be ascribed to any of them. In fact, his own definitions prove that they are inconceivable apart from one another. He defines *sattvam*, for instance, as the essence which *manifests* itself in a phenomenon and is characterised by this tendency. But even the word, tendency, cannot mark it off as an independent factor from activity, for all energy is, as he justly observes, kinetic in Sāṃkhya and Yoga. See *The Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus*, pp. 3, 6 & 8.

perfect and, therefore, purposeless with that which is in essence only an indeterminate potentiality, though owing to the combination it becomes a series of facts with a tendency towards that completeness and permanence which belong only to the other principle. This is virtually the purpose referred to above; and it works more or less blindly in lower forms of life but becomes fully conscious of itself in man as an irrepressible longing to realise all that he believes to be latent in himself. Thus while their efforts are directed towards maintaining their ground against rivals and enemies and their experience is determined, therefore, by the circumstances in which they find themselves, man goes beyond the struggle for sheer existence in planning a career for himself and working intelligently for it. And he lays by in this way a store of new experiences for the future in the new forms of activity to which he comes to apply his resources.

Here we come across a fateful peculiarity of the human species, which is stressed in Yoga as a valid excuse for the elaborate course of discipline prescribed by it. While other creatures reap what they have previously sown, man sows for the future besides gathering the harvest that is already ripe. They live in the sensuous present determined for them by antecedent conditions, and all their activities proceed from impulses which aim at partial and temporary satisfaction without reference to permanent values, though these impulses are but special forms of the broader end of security against decay and loss. But in man the comprehensive purpose of attaining perfection comes clearly into view, and even when he cannot be unmindful of the solicitation of a present want or passion, he is able, generally speaking, to select the course that he should follow and to use past experience to interpret the present situation. Hence he seems to stand outside the development chalked out for him and to modify it according to his lights. Still even his freedom moves within a circle of necessity, and all that can be claimed is that necessity drives him with a sufficiently loose rein.

#### 17. *Transmigration and the law of Karma*

What then is this necessity ? The answer of the yogī to this question deserves special notice as it furnishes the key to much that is peculiar in Indian systems of thought. Whatever you do

with a purpose leaves, according to him, a trace (*karmāśaya*) behind, a tendency, that is to say, to reproduce itself when the circumstances are favourable. In other words, a habit is formed, the strength of which is determined by repetition or by the intensity of the underlying feeling. At the same time, what you experience as a result of your activity remains stored up in your memory, for nothing is completely forgotten, though here too suitable conditions are needed for a revival. Some of the things that you do react within a measurable time if not at once on the bent and mood of your mind, while others fail to make a lasting impression because the motives, that have prompted to them, are neutralised by impulses of an opposite tendency. But the rest must wait for the exercise of their plastic stress if other moulding influences happen to be dominant in your present life\* Suppose you do certain things which are worthy of a divine being. The divine nature cannot, however, appear at once in you in its perfection in consequence of them, because it is incompatible with the general tenor of your thoughts and activities. But they continue to exist in a tendency to repeat themselves, and if in course of time they are fortified by instincts and impulses of a kindred nature, they are bound to secure the conditions of a divine existence for you.

Yoga does not countenance the view that the human mind is the highest manifestation of subjectivity. Higher forms are, it is true, unknown to ordinary experience. But ordinary experience is not allowed the privilege of establishing a negative conclusion in other matters, since we freely admit that the world is one of infinite objectivity, though we know only a few things in it. Besides, it is carrying the method of simple enumeration too far to assume that the understanding must be encased everywhere in the kind of physical envelope which it has in a small planet like ours and that it is absent, therefore, from spheres in which the human organism cannot live and thrive. If it can outlast the shock of death, then in view of the purposeful adjustment of things in Nature, there is better reason

\* For a full discussion of the subject, see *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II, 12 & 13 and explanations of these in *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*.

for concluding that it steers its way to a suitable rebirth here or elsewhere.

It is not a case of the award of felicity and misery in exact proportion to the deserts of individuals. The dispensation of retributive justice by an impartial tribunal is not an article of faith in Yoga, which holds that voluntary activity contains in itself the seeds of so-called reward or punishment, which sprout in due course in the mind of the actor. But those who limit their gaze to the short span of a single life miss its far-reaching significance and so bring in the theory of extraneous aid or control to account for its legitimate consequences. This is popular metaphysics cut out to suit the comprehension of people who would not go beyond the most obvious causal nexus in their effort to understand life. There is, however, no warrant for assuming that life requires to be periodically directed and controlled from outside for the proper development of its latent possibilities. And the yogī holds at any rate that this end is attained by life creating life in the same way as movement generates movement in the external world.\*

Every life exhibits on the whole a fairly definite character which it owes to the intensity or persistence of certain impulses and instincts. But these prove even more potent in determining the character of the life that follows through the 'traces' that they leave behind. You cannot deny vitality and creative power to these traces unless you believe that in death an individual delivers up his whole being to dissolution or hold that existence must start every time with a clean slate for the writings of experience. But if life, the supreme manifestation of primal energy, must fall to dust as soon as a certain set of experiences is over, you can offer no valid reason for assuming that it may be renovated by an external force. Besides, the dread of death in new-born infants and the lowest animals and their instinctive

\* Pringle-Pattison is right when he says that in Indian systems the heart of the world-process is moral retribution functioning as a natural law and requiring no Divine supervision to enforce it. But he seems to regard it as a mere presupposition since he traces it to an 'overpowering sense of the necessity of justice.' See *The Idea of Immortality*, p. 112. The following paragraphs may show, however, how the law is thought to operate and what forces are held to be at work in making it a terrible reality.

aversion to certain objects and movements (*abhiniveśa*) show plainly enough that the mind is not featureless nor without a store of reminiscences even in forms of life that are imperfectly organised.\*

It follows that death has been the prelude so far to every type of existence that is possible to us. And we have no reason for assuming that it will be anything else in future. On the contrary, there is much to be said in favour of the view that when the curtain falls on a certain set of experiences, the impulses and instincts, that have just played a conspicuous part, array themselves for a fuller display or in other words for the exhibition of their remote as well as proximate consequences. They are the most significant things in life, the most effective of its expressions, and so if anything survives the shock of death it must be they. But they can exist only as determining factors, for it is impossible to form a different conception of them. So when death offers the opportunity, they build a representative body for themselves and for kindred cravings and motives, while others which have been hostile so far are obliged to stand over for a more suitable occasion. The materials for the construction come from the inexhaustible store of Nature to which they themselves belong and the plan is derived from reminiscences of what the individual has achieved and undergone in previous existences (*vāsanās*) while the selective power is exercised by the

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* and *Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, IV. 8-10.

Pringle-Pattison observes, with regard to this conception, that "the individuals A, B, C are, in the absence of memory, juridically separate persons," and that "the satisfaction gained by punishing B for the faults of A is an illusion of the imagination for any other whipping boy would do as well". See *The Idea of Immortality*, p. 113. But he is carried away here by his own presuppositions, and one may very well ask who wants to be satisfied? Yogi simply accounts for the experiences of B by referring them to the inexorable law of moral causation. It may be argued, indeed, that such a view of moral government takes away the strongest motive to good conduct. And this is what Pringle-Pattison means when he says that "only if a person can consciously connect the punishment with the crime, can the suffering have its (remedial and purifying effect)." But according to Yoga, the ultimate object (*parama puruṣārtha*) is not a larger dose of pleasure or a smaller admixture of pain, but complete and permanent elimination of misery which may be secured by being perfectly unselfish or, in other words, by ceasing to be a self. And the spectacle of the moral order is of value only because it exhibits the inherent weakness of phenomenal life in which limited causes are followed by limited effects.

dominant instincts and impulses (*pradhāna karmāśayas*). They were able to choose or create the external conditions for their expression in the life that is just over; but after the dissolution of the body they have facilities for determining the internal conditions as well.

There is no good ground for holding that an individual is tied down to the type of existence which is his at the present hour. He has much in common with other creatures, and there are times when he approaches them very close in behaviour and temperament. The difference in form and feature cannot be an insuperable obstacle when death paves the way for a reconstruction. And the telling factors in this work of reconstruction must be the tendencies that are being developed or the impulses that are playing an important role. So if a different order of existence is necessary for their fuller manifestation, there will be nothing to prevent them from crossing the narrow border that divides species from species.\* Besides, they have an unerring guide in this migration as we shall presently see. And it eliminates the chances of a glaring misfit between organisation and behaviour.

If A thinks, feels and acts like a human being with but rare and insignificant lapses, he ensures thereby a human existence for himself after this life's day is over, for in no other way can

\* Dr. Seal has some excellent observations on the nature of this causation and, indeed, of causation generally, which are given here. "Describing", says he, "the production of bodies (organic vehicles) for individual souls out of matter of prakṛiti under the influence of their merit and demerit, as concomitant conditions, Patanjali points out that nonmaterial concomitants like merit and demerit do not supply any moving force or energy to the sum of material conditions, but only remove the arrest (the state of relatively stable equilibrium) in a given collocation, even as the owner of a field removes the barrier in flooding his field from a reservoir of water. This description is intended to represent the super-physical influence of non-material concomitants (or causes) like volition, merit and demerit, etc., but the causal operation of a material concomitant condition is essentially the same; there is the same reservoir of stored-up energy in a given collocation, the same condition of arrest or relatively stable equilibrium, the same liberation of the stored-up potential energy, which flows along the line of least resistance; the only difference being that in the case of material concomitants the *sti mulu* which removes the arrest is physical, instead of being transcendental as in the case of nonmaterial causes like will, merit and demerit, etc.". See *The Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus*, pp. 13-16.



there be an appropriate manifestation of the mental and moral powers which are being trained and fortified in him by exercise. If, however, he develops propensities and cultivates a temper that mark off the feline family, a repetition of human existence will be an anomaly in his case, and Nature which exhibits such a nice adjustment of means to end will forbid it, not, indeed, by invoking a foreign arbiter whose interference must be incomprehensible, but by simply allowing free scope to the dominant impulses and cravings. The major revolution has already taken place in him; so the minor change in form and feature follows naturally if not necessarily, and the condition required for it is furnished from A's inexhaustible store of reminiscences. He has like all other individuals, passed through every grade of existence, as he is the outcome of the dateless union of absolute thought with Nature. But his past remains in undisturbed forgetfulness except in so far as the commanding voice of the present summons it to determine a future for him. That commanding voice is of the mental and moral forces that are looking out for a career. And it is naturally answered by the recollection of the form, feature and behaviour that are best suited for their purpose. The recall is, in fact, like the recollection of a long-forgotten scene or event at the instance of some thought or feeling associated with it.\* But instead of being a pastime of the imagination, it proves a stern reality for the individual on account of the forces that are at work.

This reappearance of apparently played-out forces in flesh and blood or in some finer corporeal mould will not appear more of a miracle than anything else in Nature if we bear in mind that everything in it is made of mind-stuff and that it testifies to the existence of no other force than that of the will. It is movement all over the world and throughout the divisions of time, but every form of this movement is due either to the will of the Being who is responsible for the order of the universe or to the will of inferior creatures like ourselves. It is true that we cannot by simply desiring create the tiniest thing or cause the slightest motion. The will, however, is much more than a desire or a resolution, being the expression of the entire personality.

\* See *Tattva-Vaiśārādī* IV 9.

And what a mighty strength it can be when properly focused, the yogi knows from his own experience, since he is able to do things which are incomprehensible to ordinary minds. But even if his achievements are left out of account as exceptional in character, we have only to call to mind the profound though subtle influence of our most persistent thoughts and sentiments on the organism, in order to form some idea of what their collective impulse may accomplish when no longer obstructed in its formative activity by a definite set of external conditions.

What then is death ? It has been aptly described as a turn in the outward urge of the energy which appears as life. We miss the individual who has turned the corner or fail to identify him because he is in a new set of conditions dictated by a fresh assortment of his powers. He misses himself too because his past experience is no longer relevant and is, therefore, forgotten. The man who leaves the country for the town leaves behind not only his old friends and neighbours but also some of his old habits and thoughts as they are unsuited to his new environment, and the change is not always deliberate but is often wrought by the pressure of circumstances. A similar but much more thorough change takes place in passing entirely out of the present scene of activities and experiences.

But if the individual must leave on this side of the covered way of death all recollection of what he has learnt or undergone, then the link is snapt, which might relate his present existence to that which may be in store for him, for without some continuity of experience they cannot get related. The yogi claims, indeed, to be able to recover the details of previous lives by a special kind of concentration; but they are certainly lost to ordinary consciousness, and his doctrine offers no assurance that a better fate awaits what is valuable in present experiences. Death, therefore, instead of fulfilling a cherished purpose will defeat all hopes and aspirations. Such is the criticism of those who have in their minds a picture of personal continuity glowing with the vivid tints of present longings and enjoyments, when they speak of the immortality of the soul. But continuity of this kind must be impossible or at any rate intolerable without continuity of environment which, however, is excluded by the very nature of death and rebirth. And successive lives cannot

be characterised as absolutely unconnected if their distinctive features must be ascribed to the plastic stress of antecedent activities and impressions. On any other supposition, the manifest inequalities of powers, opportunities and possessions must be set down to the freaks of outrageous Fortune. The yogī holds, therefore, that, instead of being blown about at death like leaves in autumn, individuals make their way to appropriate scenes of experience with their mental and moral outfits predetermined by what they have already done and suffered.

The belief is, no doubt, widely entertained that the present life had no antecedents but that it will be followed by another unlimited in extent and immeasurably greater in happiness or misery according to the desert of the individual. But reward is painfully out of correspondence with desert in this life; and even if it is assumed that the account will be satisfactorily balanced in the next, one may reasonably ask why conditions should be widely dissimilar in an existence which is preparatory for all to such a consummation. Social, physiological and material concomitants cannot satisfactorily account for the inequality, for the question arises why these should be so diverse for creatures who have not done anything yet to merit a differential treatment.\* If they are the victims of accidents here, what guarantee is there that accidents will be completely eliminated elsewhere? The contingency that clings to the present existence may, for aught we know, be magnified in the next.

\* Rajendra Lal Mitra quotes the following opinion of a Christian missionary on the bearing of the doctrine of metempsychosis on the vexed question of the origin of evil. "Evil exists, and it is not to be supposed that evil befalls any one undeservedly. When, therefore, a new-born child who had no opportunity of acting either rightly or wrongly, is found suffering evil, it is inferred that the evil is the fruit of evil deeds done in a former state of existence. If you ask how the person became disposed to do evil in that former state of existence, the answer is ready, it was the consequence of evil deeds done in a state of existence still anterior, and so on. You have only now to apply the Newtonian principle, that what is true at every assignable point short of the limit, must be true at the limit, and then there is no assignable point in the existence of evil in past time at which point its existence cannot be accounted for by the hypothesis of antecedent evil-doing; it follows (argue the Hindus) that the existence of evil is accounted for on this hypothesis; and further, they contend, it is accountable on no other".—*The Yogā Aphorisms, of Patañjali*, Preface lxiv.

Still sturdy common sense may object that the body is too solid, too substantial to be created by mental forces alone. That it is solid is admitted at once, but solidity is only a name for a particular kind of sense-impression or mental fact. If the expression is taken to imply any greater measure of reality than that of fleeting appearances, such a distinction must be denied to the body. It remains, indeed, very much alike for a time; but it is, in strict truth, a succession of phenomena, being comparable to a volume of smoke or a jet of water or the flame of a lamp, which preserves the same appearance though new materials are continually replacing the old.

#### 18. *Bondage and deliverance*

Every individual then takes shape as a series of phenomena in the animating presence of absolute Intelligence. But as the principles involved have been always conjoined, we cannot say that there was a time when he was not in existence as such. The series is terminable, however, and so the question arises what he will be like, when his experiences and activities have ceased. The answer of the yogī is clear and emphatic on this point. His nature will suffer transformation, it is true; but he will gain by the loss of what is phenomenal and transitory about him, because Thought will remain what it has always been. As we are familiar with appearances, we are apt to regard the change as dismemberment if not annihilation and not as the cutting away of morbid growths. But since his phenomenal existence is the quest of an unattainable object, his true life may be said to commence with the shedding of his individuality and the disappearance of its activities and interests.

Yoga states, however, with iterated emphasis that in the universe we are face to face with an eternal fact or process, so that the association between the ultimate principles must be regarded as both beginningless and indissoluble. But how then can the "erring spirit" expect to free itself from the limitations of phenomenal existence? In answering the question we have to bear in mind that this system infers a plurality of principles of awareness from patent diversities in experience, outlook and disposition. Each such principle is associated in its own way with the self-same Nature in the form of a distinct individual,

who after the requisite experience seeks liberation from the thralldom of misery; and when he succeeds Nature ceases to exist for him. His personality is dissolved into its elements, and he becomes pure thought, or thought divested of those features which restrict and distort it while appearing to give it definiteness and a centre of reference. But the phenomenal world continues to exist for other individuals; and as they are countless in number and in various stages of progress towards the goal, its complete disappearance cannot be an event in time.\*

The mind is said to be resolved into its elements when Intelligence is thus dissociated from an oppressive burden. But it seems at first sight to be an inappropriate way of describing the closure of a series of facts, while if it is characterised as the lapse of a coherent heterogeneity into potentiality, the question remains whether in this state of potentiality the mind retains its distinctness from other minds. But the yogi holds that minds never break away from the parent stock of Nature, that they are appearances of the self-same reality and not independent and exclusive products of it. If you imagine a limitless ocean, the surface of which breaks into billows of diverse amplitude and height in different parts where different winds happen to be blowing, then in spite of its unity, this ocean may seem to be a number of smaller seas, but only because it is subject to a multiplicity of influences. If, however, the wind falls in any quarter, the billows will subside there and along with them the semblance of distinctness, which was due to foreign influence, will disappear. So it must be with the mind which is an appearance or a series of appearances of a special character so long as it shines by the light which it reflects from absolute thought. But when that light is withdrawn, it has nothing to mark it off even as a possibility, it loses both prospective and present value as a separate series of presentations, feelings and resolutions.

We see thus that an infinite possibility takes form as innumerable selves or recipients of experience in the light of the immutable principle of awareness. These selves, which are forms of

\* See *Tattva-Vaiśārāḍi*, I, 22.

radiant energy, are goaded to their struggle for fulness of existence by the conviction that peace and perfection are attainable by way of experience. Hence there is diversified actuality, which is beginningless because the elements that are involved are primary and no reason can be guessed for their union in time. But the process results in evil and pain, and any way it cannot achieve the end in view since perfection and peace are incompatible with change and movement at all stages, while the individuals that engage in it are but manifestations of what is essentially changeful and active, though their experience is coloured throughout by the belief that they can get rid of their manifold shortcomings. Yet this experience is not valueless, because it is only after they have been repeatedly tempted by evil and tested by pain that they are able to discover their limitations and to desist from efforts which are destined to failure. They lapse, indeed, into a featureless potentiality when these efforts disappear, since activity is their essence. But even this is preferable to a form of existence which may be described as a stupendous superstructure of misery built on the unsure foundation of an error.

Whose then is the bondage and how is he delivered? To answer this question we must bear in mind that bondage is neither more nor less than subjection to misery. But deliverance then may seem to be a narrow practical object for the attainment of which neither philosophical speculation nor spiritual discipline is required, since we try always to eliminate misery from our lives and feel sometimes that we have succeeded. This, however, is an illusion which rapidly converts itself into a double measure of dissatisfaction, for existence in the phenomenal world and as a part of it can be but disappointment and suffering if it is a quest of permanence and perfection. The empirical ego seeks them and seeks them in vain, as they can never be found among fleeting appearances. So life protracted in the circumstances can mean but protracted woe and even extinction is a blessed deliverance for it. Nature earns an enviable quietus in the cessation of its futile efforts, and there is nothing to deplore in this lapse of misdirected energy into potentiality, especially as after the disillusionment it cannot fulfil any useful purpose, peace being unattainable in turmoil and stability in mutation.

But how does it affect absolute thought ? It obtains isolation thereby from the world of appearances. Of bondage and liberation there can be no question here, as limitation, yearning and effort are foreign to its nature. Being perfect, it can seek nothing and so can never know disappointment. The quest belongs to the empirical ego as well as the subsequent disenchantment, which comes after it has dearly paid for its error in identifying itself with absolute thought. We do, indeed, speak of the deliverance of our higher nature from the trammels of the lower. But that is because we recognise that the consciousness of imperfection and strife is due to its presence and not because we hold that it may be warped or contaminated by the association. It is just as a king is said to win or lose a battle though his soldiers only are engaged, and the gain or loss is said to be his even when he may be utterly indifferent to the result. But is not absolute thought responsible in a way for experience and all that hangs by it ? Yes, it is, because its mere presence causes a ferment in the materials of our conscious life. And you may, if you choose, say that it is immanent in them, because they must cease to build outside its vivifying presence. But you must remember at the same time that its timeless fullness cannot be identified with this or that or anything else on the finite plane and in the stream of mutations.

Still it may be asked whether the disappearance of the ego is a consummation devoutly to be prayed and worked for, whether life, chequered though it be by long stretches of suffering, is not yet worth living. This extinction of personality and all that it stands for seems to be a sad cure for the evils of life. Yes, it does so long as we are dominated by the idea that our thoughts, feelings and activities exhaust the significance of our existence and that the self about which they centre is the primary and indubitable thing in us. Actuated by this idea we seek perfection and permanence in the phenomenal world to find at last that we cannot lift ourselves in this way out of the stream of ever-flowing time which takes us from one stage to another, none of which has any pretensions to finality. Life is then seen to be 'trouble on trouble, pain on pain' with but occasional gleams of happiness which serve only to intensify the dense darkness in which it is enveloped. It cannot, indeed, be otherwise, since

becoming can have no end of its own and appearance can be but the precursor of appearance. But when this truth is clearly realised, there dawns along with it the conviction that beyond the interrelated phenomena of cogniser and cognised, actor and things acted upon, there is a reality which is the sustainer of all appearance, but of which there can be no conception in the ordinary sense as all conceptions presuppose it, though in the permanence and unity that is erroneously ascribed to the empirical ego, there is a sort of recognition of its presence.

But is not this dualism, like other forms of it, a play of abstractions in which independence and adequacy are claimed for features of the complex reality that is given in experience ? And should we not join issue with the yogi and say that the partnership between Nature and thought cannot be dissolved without involving both of them in equal ruin ? His answer is that nothing is more persistently, generally and ardently desired than freedom from the inevitable vicissitudes of this partnership, which, however, could never be an object if it entailed annihilation. He holds in fact that the ultimate fulfilment of such an end enters always as an ingredient in the conception of happiness and that when men attain their full mental and moral stature, it seizes upon them and makes them work intelligently towards itself to the exclusion of all other ends. Thus what was at first an obscure and struggling ideal comes in course of the time to be placidly accepted as the position of equilibrium towards which every individual must make his way as nothing else can repay the travail of experience. But till then the bewildering details of phenomenal existence obscure and even mutilate the truth about it.

Dr. Urquhart puts in a plea for the relative soul, the soul that strives and struggles and advances with unequal steps towards the goal of moral excellence.\* It is a plea that finds an echo in many hearts, and even Yoga allows a certain validity to it, which, however, is wrongly interpreted as proof of divided allegiance. The yogi values moral excellence as a means to an end, but looks beyond the 'actual soul' with its problems and view-points to an entity that has no problems to solve and no difficulties to overcome. Intelligence cannot err or be deluded

\* *Pantheism and the Value of Life* pp. 368-370.



or get into scrapes. And unless you admit that it has an independent existence you cannot explain anything satisfactorily. Dr. Urquhart characterises the yogi's aspiration to rest in it as negative, to contrast it with the longing to complete the soul. But how can that be completed in time which is always complete ? The effort, however, to attain its static perfection after shedding all that is complex and unstable in human nature is certainly as positive and strenuous as anything can be.

We should be justified in regarding the process of experience thus envisaged as pointless or circular did Yoga accept the view that the ultimate principles existed once in 'single blessedness' and retrograded from it by an unequal union. But it holds that the mesalliance was not an event in time, so that according to it an original stain has to be worked off by experience and not a fall from an original state of perfection to be redeemed by penance and suffering.\* So the freedom from excrescences that is sought in it will be an absolutely new thing for us when it is attained. Yoga puts the fact roundly when it says that our existence as individuals originated in the repudiation by Nature of the essential difference between it and Intelligence and that the variegated show has been kept up since by a ceaseless repetition of the same error in some form or other. It is, in fact, a pointed way of saying that circumscribed mental states in serial order are facts in Nature to which the immutability and completeness of thought cannot be properly ascribed, though a claim to these virtues is persistently put forward in each and all of them.

It may be objected that our fleeting and tormented existence is never regarded as beyond the reach of change and decay and that even those who live immersed in the present do mark it off

\* It may be noted in this connection that Christian theology does not attempt to explain the origin of evil. "The Scriptures", says Whately, "leave us with respect to the difficulty in question, just where they find us and are manifestly not designed to remove it. He who professes to account for the existence of evil by merely tracing it up to the first evil recorded as occurring, would have no reason to deride the absurdity of an atheist who should profess to account for the origin of the human race, without having recourse to a Creator, by tracing them up to the first pair." *Essays on Some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion*, preface p. 12.

in some way from what is before and behind it. But permanence is claimed at the same time for the self that appears and disappears with every perishable pulse of thought or desire; it is believed to be out of time and identical with itself amid a vortex of mutations, though it is but an incident in or a feature of them. An experience that is not owned is, no doubt, a contradiction; but all that may be concluded therefrom is that the owner is given in it along with what is experienced. Whenever I perceive a thing, I perceive at the same time the ego or self which appears to appropriate it. I claim, however, too much for this objective person, this ego which is perceived like anything else when I attribute to it an unchangeableness and simplicity which can belong only to the ultimate condition of transitory and diverse experiences and not to any of their details. And this is what I do when I think of myself as an entity that perceives, remembers and wills without suffering any modification on account of these activities. It is an assumption that overshadows all ordinary experience and thus wraps it in a fatal ambiguity. Or rather it is the essence of such experience, which is impossible without reference to a self that is supposed to be permanent and immutable. So there is no real contradiction in saying that phenomenal life, beginningless though it is, is yet the logical consequent of a delusion. And a statement like this has a certain pragmatic value since in stressing the equivocal character of life, it indicates clearly enough what our true and final being must be.

But the course of our evolution, as determined by impulses and activities, is not always nor even normally upward. On the other hand, it is often like a race down a steep hill-side in which we must continue to run even against our better judgment in order that we may keep on our legs. But repeated disappointment strengthens the will while it enlightens the intellect and thus enables us to turn away from a ruinous course. Hence though phenomenal life is a suicidal repudiation of a fundamental truth at every stage, yet the controlling influence of the error steadily declines in its higher reaches. And as we pass from one of them to another, the idea becomes more and more clear that our life is like a stupendous house of cards that must ultimately collapse by its own weight or like an imposing edifice that must topple

down some day because it stands on an unsure foundation. But it continues to stand there though tottering to its fall till it is completely undermined by the truth which has been so far more or less ignored, the truth, namely, that there is a world of difference between absolute thought and our petty, changeful individuality, which happens, however, to wear a mask and play a dignified role. This impersonation, this confusion of mutability with the immutable is the mainspring of phenomenal existence in its endless variety, since there can be no experience without an experient who poses for the time being as a permanent entity standing over against his temporary possessions.

This error is Protean in its manifestations and is to be found in one or other of its forms in every strand of thought or feeling or resolution. These have been grouped, however, under four heads, as self-assertion (*asmitā*), liking (*rāga*), dislike (*dveṣa*), and dread of whatever is likely to injure and, in particular, of death (*abhiniveśa*). Existence is unrest and misery owing to their baleful influence, and so they have received the significant appellation of afflictions (*kleśa*). At the same time life follows life in what threatens to be an interminable series because they furnish the motive force, as our actions, which are physical movements, must be abortive in this respect without them. So long as they are dominant, existence is like a torrent which tumbles and tosses and leaps from rock to rock in its career of wild fury. But when they are attenuated by the appropriate discipline, it flows back as it were and comes in sight of the highlands of wisdom and peace. And when they disappear at last, the obscuring mist of phenomenal existence passes away with them, while our true and final nature shines out in all its glory. Its completeness leaves no room for assertion against others; it has no good to seek, no evil to shun and no danger to combat.\*

\* In *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, 1. 12, the mind is compared to a river which may have two different courses, one of them leading to the lonely eminence of the spirit while the other reaches the rock of phenomenal existence. The incline is that of discriminating knowledge in the first case and of error in the second.

## CHAPTER V

### THE DISCIPLINE OF YOGA

1. *The reality and adequacy of the ultimate object, which is the extinction of misery.*

The yogī seeks elimination of misery and that alone as he has no delusions about the worth of pleasures, which are sporadic, transient and easily forgotten while the poignancy of suffering outlasts them in our memory. His indictment of pleasures is, in fact, more comprehensive, as he classes them with misery owing to their dependence on external good of some form or other, be it fortune or honour or the good-will and affection of others. For the power of what is outside can only enchain and corrupt us, if our ultimate end is substantial inwardness or complete freedom from all that is foreign. And that such must be our object appears from the perplexing sense of vanity and aimlessness that sometimes oppresses even the thoughtless as they contemplate the world in which chance is so often stronger than their will. The yoke may be gentle sometimes ; it may be lightly and even gladly borne at first; but it is bound to acquire a crushing weight with the growth of experience and thus to harden and materialise whatever has an upward trend in our phenomenal nature. Both pleasures and pains are, therefore, to be avoided, and the former are not specifically mentioned only because they are less momentous in spite of the fascination that they possess owing to our vicious tendency to confound the impure with the pure and to ascribe durability to what is only fleeting and accidental.\*

As, however, pleasures and pains are the stuff of life, to eschew them must be to abjure it. This is, indeed, a staggering programme for men who are smugly content with their empirical existence under the impression that it may satisfy their highest needs. But though it appears to be busy and full, yet there is a lack of reality

\* For a comprehensive indictment of whatever is foreign to the spirit, see *Aniruddha-Vṛtti*, II. 1, VI. 7 & 8 and *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II 15.

behind its bustle and tumult, for it is a series of processes for the attainment of an object that recedes ceaselessly and is, therefore, never actually realised. In appraising it, we may, if we choose, leave out as inessential the baffled aspirations and misdirected efforts that figure so conspicuously in many lives. We cannot, however, similarly ignore the fact that man has no sure hold of reality in it, that he drifts with time and is so dependent on momentary situations as to be constrained to express himself by constant change. Life of this sort, so uncertain of its aims and inadequate in its means, does not certainly come up to a high standard of excellence. Yet its inadequacy, its perpetual incompleteness remains unnoticed owing to his ceaseless anxiety about those means and his hurried pursuit of them.

It is, therefore, a life of pretence to what is real, a poor substitute with but occasional gleams of what is genuine.\* It is hemmed in by all sorts of impediments and moves, therefore, from compromise to compromise and not in a straight line nor even necessarily towards that state of static perfection, compared with which every submission to an alien good must appear mean and even ruinous. And this inconsequence is due not entirely to foreign influence ; it is in Nature and appears, therefore, in the inner world as a perpetual whirl of thought, activity and exhaustion. And yet life appears to be full of meaning or purpose because our intense pre-occupation with its endless variety makes us miss its character as a whole. Thus every fleeting good comes to be regarded as a real gain, and we are bandied about from one state to another, fancying all the while that we are making steady progress. But to the unclouded vision of the yogī, the whole process appears with dazzling clearness to be irrelevant except in so far as it may pave the way for ultimate disenchantment. We are out for the discovery of what will permanently still our longings. So anything that is episodic or impermanent or any number of such things cannot be our object. Yet we run after them, and in the excitement of the chase forget the lesson that may be learnt at

\* *Sāmkhya-Sūtra*, VI. 11 says that good and bad conduct and the happiness and misery that result therefrom belong properly to the life of Nature, though owing to the failure to discriminate between it and Intelligence, they are wrongly attributed to the latter.

every turn of it. Our life is chaotic and fragmentary in consequence; it is a noisy and self-conscious agitation, a lot of unrest as a preparation, forsooth, for contentment and peace. Put briefly, it lacks spiritual content in spite of, or rather owing to, its extravagance and ostentation. This spiritual bankruptcy is what the yogī understands by misery, and he treats them as convertible terms because all the evils of life are traceable to the absence of effective spiritual insight.

Admitting, however, that the life of Nature is poor, where is the warrant for the faith that we may outgrow it and yet retain what we ought to cherish? Even spiritual aspirations derive both content and sustenance from the oppositions of experience; they come to know themselves in coping with the tasks set by the latter; and could we rule it out on the ground that its course is sinuous and narrow, there would be left over a blank, featureless thing which must be difficult to conceive and still more difficult to name. To criticism like this, the yogī would say that we have to fight with the conditions in which we find ourselves immersed only because they limit us while appearing to uphold and nourish our being and that our spiritual advance is measured by the extent of our triumph over those conditions. Hence our ideal lies, according to him, in casting off this external bondage; and though this process may be difficult and long, we cannot with impunity give it up at any stage short of completion. For what is spirituality if it does not imply independence of the principles that determine the growth and decay of things in Nature? Of its claim to unqualified freedom, nothing can be abated without converting it into a kind of expediency.\* We seek perfection, and to perfection, circumstances must be irrelevant. We turn away in disappointment and disgust from transitory appearances; so the abiding reality to which we pin our faith cannot be defined by space and time or included in any limited order.

It is true that the intensity of our longing is not always a conclusive proof of the existence or worth of what we want.

\* Nāgoji Bhaṭṭa observes that when owing to complete insight, error which is the cause of experience disappears, experience too disappears, and since experience is bondage, deliverance is won. See *Vitti*, II. 23.

We give up many quests because the objects sought turn out to be unreal or undesirable. We begin many things in doubt and distrust about the end, which takes definite shape only as we proceed. And we set down these errors and over-sights to inexperience. But we cannot interpret in this wise the universal and deep-seated longing for deliverance from the uncertainties and imperfections of phenomenal life. A host of other objects solicits our attention and interest with varying degrees of success; but we return to it again and again as if it were the essence of life. And as we grow wiser, its call becomes more imperious, and the scope of its operation is definitely recognised as transcending the limits of this mundane existence. A moving force like this cannot be ascribed to illusion, specially as under its influence we appear to wake from dream and illusion to complete alertness.

Experience then is in its higher reaches a conflict between fate and freedom, between the coercions of natural laws within and outside us and the irrepressible desire to rise above them under the impression that the basis of true life lies farther than contact with the environment. Or to put it more pointedly, there comes a stage in our phenomenal existence when we appear to stand outside our growth as planned by Nature, to review its possibilities and to reject them one by one in favour of an ideal of excellence, which is beyond the mutations of Nature. But this attitude of detachment from the dust of human trials, this longing for segregation from the distracting influences of the phenomenal world can be ours only because there is a principle in us which repudiates every form of change and movement.\* We are, therefore, composed of what we would flee from and whither we must flee, and to be perfect, we have only to simplify our nature by shedding what is adventitious and disturbing.

Let us see once more what the implications are of this conception of deliverance. It is a fundamental doctrine in Yoga that even the subjectivity of the ego or the antithesis of subject

\* Anuruddha says that freedom from vicissitudes cannot belong to anything in Nature unless it becomes other than what it is, since it is eminently mutable, and that it belongs, therefore, to something which Nature appears to define or limit, See *Vṛtti*, I. 111.

and object is a fact in Nature. And so the discipline that it prescribes has for its ultimate object the transcendence of self-consciousness and all that is based on it. But the rationality of such a course has been open to dispute on the ground that we cannot surrender self-consciousness without delivering up our whole being to dissolution. The yogī contends, however, that everything does not fall to dust with our individuality, as the supreme principle of Intelligence remains even when concrete and ephemeral expressions of it disappear.\* But is not this assumption of his of a piece with realism which abstracts a feature common to a class of objects and then erects it into a self-existent reality of which those objects are regarded as so many modes ? Does he not arbitrarily separate thought from its constituents and give a living soul to its form, of which he regards every actual psychosis to be an imperfect reproduction ? To criticism like this he would reply that he does not hypostatise the mere form of thought, which certainly cannot exist apart from its content, but holds that to be the reality of realities to which the contents of thought owe their form or their expression as particular states of consciousness. It is at the centre of life, the details of which get systematised and unified in its eternal and unchanging radiance. Otherwise how can the transitory and the particular know themselves to be such or relate themselves to other particulars ? To say that the passing psychosis is itself the thinker is to restate and not to explain the mystery of the synthesis. Every event in our existence is there but for a moment; but it manages to weave past events with one another and with itself as common possessions of an imperishable and essentially simple reality. Such a bond of union cannot be in Nature, nor can it be an object of knowledge in the ordinary sense, for how can the fleeting know the permanent ?

This reality then is not consciousness as we have it, but the source of that consciousness. It is not a felt tie of similarity

\* Cousin is wrong in supposing that Sāṃkhya teaches "an absolute nihilism", and Davies shows a truer insight into the character of Sāṃkhya and Yoga when he says that the soul is in these systems "the most real of all things, self-existent, never born and never dying". See *The Sāṃkhya-Kārikā of Iśwara-Krishna* pp. 96 & 97.



between successive states, but that with reference to which they appear integrated as a continuous web of conscious events. The impressions and suggestions that throng upon us and determine our attitude towards life, each in its own way, leave yet its identity intact, as otherwise they can never be cognised as diverse. So they are like episodes enacted in the presence of an impartial onlooker whose nature is in no way affected by their vicissitudes.\* Amid the confusing whirl of appearances, which make us follow a strangely tortuous course on the high seas of the world, it remains unalterably the same and is always felt to be the same, though we never catch it in the way of perception because it is the condition of all perceptions. To characterise the feeling as a subjective custom is, indeed, the arrogance of negation, since thought, which is variable and transitory like its objects cannot set up out of its own resources a standard of invariability and permanence for measuring them. It testifies, therefore, at the same time though not exactly in the same way, to a permanent or rather timeless entity and to facts which are made as it were of the stuff of time. This entity is peace and immutability as contrasted with them. And it is the blessedness of that peace and immutability which we seek or must seek at last after futile attempts to escape misery within the limits of phenomenal existence.

Buddhist thinkers have often found fault with this conception of deliverance on various grounds. Śāntideva observes that both the experient and the object of experience are lost when the mind ceases to function, so that there is no sense in saying that something is left over after the series of conscious facts has come to a close.† But this is simply ignoring the contention of the yogī that their composite character points to a two fold cause, one of which appears as objects of knowledge in the most extended sense while the other is responsible for its appearing as such or, in other words, for its figuring as phases of consciousness. The cause is not wiped out of existence with the

\* The idea is expressed by such terms as *draṣṭā*, *sākṣī* and *madhyastha*.

† *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, IX. 57. Āśvaghoṣa puts the argument in a different way when he says that if the disembodied spirit remains the knower, there is no deliverance for it since it continues to be related to objects of knowledge.

effect, and it is quite as reasonable to assume that these ultimate causes must share the fate of their partial manifestations as to say that the goldsmith who wrought a bracelet and the gold of which it was made suffer dissolution when the bracelet is melted down.

Aśvaghoṣa says that you cannot put out the light of self-consciousness without extinguishing the self at the same time.\* This is true of the objective person, of the self that is directly cognised as the central thing in every form of experience, but not of the self which can never be objectified for the simple reason that even the most fundamental type of experience or ideal existence presupposes it. The father does not necessarily die when he loses his son though after the bereavement he ceases to be a father. Similarly, Intelligence is not dissolved with the disappearance of its imperfect counterpart in experience though it ceases, of course, to be the correlate of the latter when the tie is snapped. It is not evident, therefore, that we must surrender all when we shed our limited and changeful individuality.† In fact, we must cast away even the last shred of our personalistic experience if the unqualified Intelligence behind it is to be realised at all, since what is absolute can not be caught within the meshes of particular ideas or by the limited categories of the understanding.

As renunciation is a merit, Aśvaghoṣa would have us renounce everything.‡ But this wholesale rejection cannot be an end, for even the man who commits suicide looks for a haven of repose where the worries and troubles of life will not follow him. The yogī admits that life is full of difficulties and disappointments; but he is convinced at the same time that it is not without a certain worth and dignity. And he would isolate from meaner concomitants the principal which sheds an undeniable glory on it. But the writer in question characterises his

\* *Buddha-Carita*, XII. 76. The argument is that if consciousness is the attribute of the self, to say that the self may exist without it is as reasonable as to say that fire may exist without heat and light

† Aśvaghoṣa joins issue with the yogī and says that it is impossible to surrender the changeful personality without surrendering the self that is supposed to be immutable—*Buddha-Carita*. XII. 74.

‡ *Buddha-Carita*, XII. 80

creed as a half-hearted acceptance of the Buddhist doctrine of *nirvāṇa* and opines that his practice leaves the door open for the resurgence of the 'afflictions' and so secures only a temporary respite from the woes of life.

The afflictions are, as we have already seen, error (*avidyā*), egoism (*asmitā*), attachment (*rāga*), antipathy (*dveṣa*) and the instinct of self-preservation (*abhiniveśa*). But the first is, so to speak, the fertile soil which bears a plentiful crop of the rest, as we have it whenever immutability is ascribed to what is not altogether beyond the reach of change and decay or immaculateness to what is really impure or a completely pleasurable character to what may be productive at last of pain or the static perfection of the self to what is but a feature or a fraction of the world beyond it. The second is, therefore, a specific form of the first as it is the identification of the self with things like the mind and the body in which we have partial manifestations of Intelligence. The third consists in running after things that have been associated with agreeable experiences in the past. The fourth teaches us to run away from things which have caused us pain. And the fifth shows itself mainly in a dread of death and of the various circumstances that may bring it about.

Now it goes without saying that we cannot have genuine satisfaction so long as these are in evidence, for they bind us to alien things and thus make slaves of us. Their pernicious influence ceases, indeed, to be felt in cataclysms, because the objects are absent which provoke them into activity. But when form and feature and movement return in due course, they reassert themselves, so that they remain as tendencies even when they are not operative. It is this dormant condition that is induced by the yogic practice according to Āśvaghoṣa. And the fact that the yogī begins by attenuating them through a systematic ethico-religious discipline lends colour to this view. But it does not stop with their attenuation, for he strives next for a new kind of being above the plane of Nature wherein his true and ultimate self cannot be obscured by the impulses and conditions of phenomenal existence. And Āśvaghoṣa does not show why there must be a retrograde movement to its instability and inconsequence after the complete inwardness or independence of spiritual life has been attained.

Yoga compares our present life to the rotation of a wheel because our likings and dislikes prompt to activities which, as being either good or bad, entail consequences that are agreeable or otherwise while these in their turn give rise to fresh likings and dislikes. Thus the wheel revolves without any chance of its coming to a stop of itself especially as the motive power is constantly renewed by our vicious tendency to regard as relevant and even essential things that do not pertain to the spirit. This tendency is the centre or nave as it were of the wheel, and to it are attached as so many spokes our motives and activities and their effects, for these derive all their strength or reality from the impression that an unclouded state of well-being may be ensured by the pursuit of external goods. So what is needed is that this 'fretful stir unprofitable' should cease and that the luxuriant growth of erroneous notions or of extravagant values set on useless appendages should be cut down root and branch.\*

## 2. The means of attainment

The end determines the nature of the means. Composure or equanimity (*praśāntavāhītā sthiti*) and detachment from the good things of empirical existence (*vairāgya*) must be sedulously cultivated. They are discriminated at the outset because the mind may remain a scene of disturbance owing to the activity of a depraved or wayward imagination even after every seductive appeal to the senses or the understanding has come to be definitely rejected. But they are indistinguishable in their higher forms as complete indifference to secular interests and affairs results in even-mindedness. Besides, the ultimate object of both is the same, *viz.*, cessation of mental activity in so far as it involves the duality of subject and object and is, therefore, life at the level of Nature. And every advance in that direction has to be welcomed, though only as showing the way to new heights. The task before us is to win a new basis for life by transcending the antithesis and inconsequence which characterise it at present. But Yoga recognises that the progress towards the blessedness of that peace and finality can only be gradual.

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, IV. 11.

At the same time it cautions the neophyte against the futility of occasional and spasmodic efforts and points out that vacant moods which are due to sluggishness are in no sense a preparation for that self-possession which he must seek. If he wants stability within himself in spite of perpetual change in his circumstances, his practice of composure (*abhyāsa*) must be steady and continuous; it must stretch over a considerable period and be undertaken with a genuine faith in its healing and restorative power.\*

Faith in its sovereign efficacy is like a kind mother to the yogi as it steels his heart against temptations and urges him to steer right onwards even in the most discouraging circumstances. He may expect, therefore, to pass beyond the usual halting-places and to break the bounds that appear to worldlings like unscaleable walls about their life. Yet he cannot afford to be slack at any stage of the practice under the impression that his spiritual insight is an assured possession. For even venial laches may prove dangerous precedents and succeed at last in pushing wisdom out of doors. So he is exhorted to observe the activities of his mind with some of that detachment which characterises his perception of external objects and with a view to detect and banish all irrelevant thoughts or sentiments.† The effort must be strenuous and even painful at first, but perseverance will be ultimately rewarded by the consciousness of the uninterrupted presence of the cherished thought.

Indifference (*vairāgya*) too has to be acquired by degrees. The first stage (*yatamāna*) is a resolution to abstain from all sorts of sensuous gratification or rather to teach the senses to disregard the insistent solicitations of the world outside. The second (*vyatireka*) is reached when certain classes of objects have lost their charm for the neophyte while he is trying to steel his senses against the attraction of others. In the third (*ekendriya*) the senses are adequately fortified against calls on them, but

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, I. 14. *Vijñāna-Bhikṣu* defines *abhyāsa* as the effort to steady the mind and steadiness as the final aspect of Yoga, which consists in its immobility due to complete absorption in the object before it. See *Yogasāra-Saṅgraha*, part 2.

† The effort is known as *Samprajanya* in Buddhist ethics.

there remains a vague longing in the mind for the variety of the environment, an undefined curiosity which is never strong enough to bring about the appropriate adjustment of the senses to external stimulation. The fourth (*vaśīkāra*) is perfect unconcern, total loss of interest in the external goods that may be enjoyed here or hereafter. The yogī who has attained it has died to the world in order to complete the independence of his inner nature. But even this is not the final stage (*paravairāgya*) which is reached only when he realises his separateness from every form of manifestation and is able to say that he is not even mind or any of its ultimate constituents.\* It is true that the mere attempt to soar to such a height has been characterised as the frantic effort of the mystic to escape from the baffling complexities of the actual by an adventurous flight to the inconceivable. But our ordinary waking consciousness is incomplete or imperfect because the self is confronted in it by a world of objects which assert their independence. So there is according to the yogī, a premature closing of our accounts with existence if we refuse to go beyond it. And he aspires at any rate to rise above the limiting relations with all sorts of otherness in order that he may be at home with himself. But should we not regard his attitude of detachment as the petulant expression of a metaphysician's distaste for whatever is not vague and vast? No, it has a positive aspect, as he contends that it is dictated by an unwavering conviction of the presence of an immutable reality behind his empirical existence. But the vision is apparently for those only who have successfully cultivated the habit of controlling the vagaries of the mind.†

\* Vijñāna-Bhikṣu distinguishes between the superior and inferior types of *vairāgya* in the following way. The former is a distaste for the good things of life, here or hereafter, due to the experience that they cannot be acquired or preserved without trouble while their loss causes pain and that the quest is never free from egoistic feelings. The latter, however, is based on a clear perception of the difference between Intelligence and the objects that appear in its light. And it is properly expressed by the proposition — I have had enough of these irrelevant things. See *Yogasāra-Saṁgraha*, Part 2.

† See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, III. 35.

### 3. *Unequal fitness of individuals for the quest*

Human beings have been divided into five classes with reference to their relative fitness for the discipline of Yoga. There are restless natures that take the problems of life lightly if, indeed, life presents any serious problems to them, while they reveal in transitory moods and live for the thrill of excitement which may be had from change and movement. It is obvious that they lack the diligence and discernment required for the comprehension of spiritual realities. And the same may be said of men of inert and sluggish temperament, who fall easily under the sway of some strong passion like lust or avarice and remain long under its influence, as they are unfit for offering any energetic opposition to tyranny of this sort. Their intense pre-occupation with the thing that interests them makes them forgetful of their true selves, and so they have little reverence for the spiritual life. Still concentration not unlike that of Yoga is possible even for men of these two classes under the stress of some dominant impulse or telling experience. It is, however, for ultimately unsatisfying objects or ideals, as they are not properly equipped for appreciating spiritual truths and retaining them in their minds.

But the majority of men are neither averse to nor unfit for a clear conception of the spiritual life, if its nature is explained to them. And they may come also to entertain a genuine feeling for it after forming a just estimate of the lights and shades of their ordinary life. A gust, however, of passion or a fit of worldliness may blow away the good result that they have obtained, so that they can never expect to rise by their spasmodic efforts to an altitude which is beyond the distracting influence of alien forces. Spells of concentration on spiritual things alternate in their history with devotion to temporal concerns, with the consequence that they remain very much what they are. There are others, however, though their number is very limited who can concentrate as long as they choose on the abiding factors of concrete, shifting experience, without any personal bias or ulterior motive. To them, Yoga is possible or rather that earlier form of it which involves a correct valuation of all that is. Lastly, there are 'the choice and master-spirits of every age', who are able to inhibit the processes that make up what we call life in order to realise the glory of Intelligence as undefined by

conditions and unpunctuated by time.\* The independent 'inner life' that they thus develop is not, indeed, consciousness in the ordinary sense of the term as the duality of experience is absent from it. But unconsciousness is as far from this state as darkness is from light. It is a release from the lower forms of cognition and an escape to the highest and therefore most real type of thought.

#### 4. *Nature of yogic intuition*

There are two clearly marked stages in the discipline of Yoga. The first is completed when the mind of the devotee acquires a penetrating insight into the nature and conditions of experience. The external world then stands revealed to him not in the confusing multiplicity of its ever-changing details, but in the broad lines of its evolution from stage to stage, so that he sees at a glance whence and how its oppressive vastness and endless mutation are derived. Equally comprehensive is the knowledge that he gets of the nature of mental process and structure, and of the genesis of even the most perplexingly involved forms of thought in self-consciousness. It is all in the form of a vision in which the contours are clear-cut and the lines of connection too bold to be missed. And his mind remains full of it, so that whatever he does or says is in perfect keeping with the meaning of the cosmos. Facts, however, do not by themselves interest him, nor even those relations between facts which we turn to account in our practical affairs. And as he is concerned solely with their ultimate bearing on human destiny, he supplements the partial view that is obtained through the senses and the understanding by turning on them the lime-light of intense con-

\* The variety of types is traced to difference of composition. The mind is made up of sentience, activity and insentience with sentience dominant on the whole. Where the influence of the other elements is considerable, the mind is fond of power and possession. If the third element is in excess of the second, the mind is wicked, ignorant, inefficient and attached to worthless things, while the opposite qualities appear when the second prevails over the third. But when both of them cease to exercise any appreciable influence, the mind recovers its health and vigour and becomes capable of meditating deeply on the difference between Intelligence and itself. See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, I. 2.



temptation under which they lie exposed to the inmost fibre of their being.

What marvels does he discover in them, what facts hidden from the many and fitted to satisfy the curiosity of the inquisitive or to fill the pockets of those who know how to convert the secrets of Nature into sources of gain ? Is he able to discover short-cuts to occult powers and beatific visions that may become public thoroughfares by the general practice of certain austerities and physical exercises ? Much has been said of the "absurd pretensions" of Yoga and of its "fanatical vagaries" in this connection. And even to-day many are so horrified by the "delirations" of its champions as to join Fitz-Edward Hall in the pious hope that books dealing with it may never be opened by the serious student, though Rajendra Lal Mitra pointed out half a century ago that it is unfair to mix up the tentes of Patañjali with their travesties by deluded mendicants or their developments by the *tāntrics*.\*

There is some advantage in defining the attitude of this great scholar towards a question which has furnished opportunities for airing prejudices of very different kinds. He did not summarily reject as apocryphal or fatuous the recipes in Patañjali's work for extraordinary improvement in psychical and physical powers. On the contrary, he expressed the hope even at that distant date that researches in a catholic spirit might lead to the discovery of valuable facts in them. And he observed that though the present state of our knowledge might prevent us from separating the wheat from the tares, yet there was much else in Yoga which showed a remarkable grasp of philosophical problems and an equally remarkable readiness to proceed to final conclusions. A patient and thorough study of these is what he pleaded for, and he supported his plea by considerations which mark off fair criticism from unreasoning asperity. "If", said he "some obviously false, or improbable, or unprovable, statements in any author would justify our rejecting the whole of his testimony, there would be no ancient author left whose testimony could be accepted, and I know not how few of our modern authors would escape the condemnation. No yogī myself, nor

\* See *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali*, preface lvi.

any wise interested in the doctrine, all I feel in the cause of truth is that there should, for the present, be a suspension of judgment, and the materials afforded by the yogīs should be subjected to examination and analysis".\*

We take up a position slightly different from that of Rajendra Lal Mitra when we say that Patañjali accepted without verification certain traditions regarding the attainment of occult powers, which were venerable for their antiquity and wide currency, to illustrate the possibilities of concentration. He was not, however, much interested in the results that they promised nor was his great commentator, Vyāsa, for other truths were nearer to their hearts, truths that have never been far from common sense or from the highest teachings of science. But the distinction lay in the manner of apprehending them and of turning them to account. For they were not theories or demonstrations to Patañjali and his followers, but facts directly and completely perceived, so that their influence was paramount in the shaping of thought and conduct.† In fact, the speciality of yogic discipline consists just in this that it offers to fundamental verities absolute possession of the mind or an over-ruling power against which other thoughts and other ways of thinking can have no chance. The difference is thus abolished between the laws of Nature and the laws of spiritual progress. What they are has been repeatedly stated in the course of this study. But they are given here in a nutshell in the hope that a concise statement will enable the candid reader at this stage to judge for himself whether they are fictions or worthless truths couched in enigmatical language to serve as the stock-in-trade of charlatans and fanatics.

### 5. *Valuation of phenomenal existence*

Everything in the world outside is seen to have a momentary existence, and any greater reality that is ordinarily ascribed to it is traced to a custom of thought dictated and kept up

\* See *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali*, preface iv & lxiii.

† The full import of the yogic expression, *sāksātkāra* must be kept steadily in view in appreciating the nature of the yogic discipline. Theory and inference may be useful in discovering the truth. But the truth thus discovered cannot be a moulding or regulating principle unless it is visualised or directly apprehended.

by the needs of our practical life. Of substantiality or persistence in change, he finds not a tittle of evidence in its features. Nor is such substantiality discovered in mental states which, besides being in perpetual flux, preserve the richest intimacy with the fleeting appearances outside them. Thus the inner and outer worlds are to him but unlike expressions of the same reality, which should be characterised as the principle of ceaseless change or movement. But since such movement must alternate with rest to be what it is, and both of them can be real only so far as they are apprehended, the principle in question appears to be compounded of activity, inertness and perceptibility, while its various expressions are set down to differences in the relative strength of these constituent factors.

He finds at the same time a trenchant and fundamental distinction between the outer and the inner world inasmuch as the details of the latter get integrated in the form of experience as part and parcel of an entity that is felt to be beyond change and movement. But between the variability and compositeness of experience and the immutability and absolute simplicity of that to which it attaches itself, there can be, in his opinion, no intrinsic connection. Hence experience, he says, is based on a misapprehension, and is rich in pain and evil. He holds, however, that it is neither necessary nor desirable as the Absolute stands in no need of improvement or addition, while the pain and evil that are inseparable from its vicissitudes give it a decidedly negative value. Hence so far as we are composite, our salvation lies, according to him, in recognising what is eternal and changeless in us and in surrendering for its sake all that is changeful and chequered in character.

#### 6. *First lessons in Yoga*

Such is the message of the yogī, and he exhorts the neophyte to have it expounded by a competent teacher and to lay it to heart after duly pondering over its implications. But this is to be a preparation only for the severe discipline of Yoga, which is considered to be essential because men may admit experience to be a deceit and yet trust to it for the recovery of their real status. Yoga is, above all, the art of life, and its philosophy is meant to furnish the principles that justify and explain

that art. So nothing is gained if its instruction is relegated to the background and simply permitted to lie there without affecting life itself. The discipline is enjoined to prevent such superficiality by giving to conviction that intensity or strength which it must have if it is to shape and fortify character.

The proper attitude of the learner is further stressed by marking it off from the curiosity that impels people to look out for new things at every turn but stops short of a thorough comprehension in every case. Those who are the victims of this blameable feeling prize surface more than depth and give up any line of enquiry that demands long and steady application. But the student of Yoga should feel the impetus of a more persistent and massive emotion, which may be defined as faith (*śraddhā*) in the greatness of his subject. Every advance that he makes should be attended by an appreciation of the worth of what he has learnt and a sense of the promise of worthier truths that his study will in due course unfold. And this sustained theoretical interest should be supplemented by a genuine yearning to realise the truths in his life. When this yearning finds vent in active endeavour (*vīrya*), it banishes ennui from the mind and turns the key upon every form of distraction. Hence results a singleness of purpose, a steadfastness of outlook (*smṛti*) which is regarded as completing the intellectual equipment of the neophyte. It is sharply distinguished however, from ordinary diligence on the one hand and on the other from that passivity of mind which is favourable to blissful reverie, inasmuch as it presupposes a minutely introspective habit and constant alertness in scanning every impulse or thought as it arises and keeping out what is irrelevant. While practising it, the yogī remains thoroughly alive to the fact that he is attending to his proper subject and to a grim determination as well to continue attending to it to the exclusion of everything else. Practice of this sort perfects his capacity for concentration, and then he is ripe for Yoga.

### 7. Ethical discipline

Still the discipline is pre-eminently ethical. This may appear strange to scholars and thinkers who are off their beat and prone to assume that spiritual truths can be discovered and appropriated in the same way as those that relate only to the

world of mechanism and appearance. But there is no finality in this world, no cause which is not an effect in its turn and no end which is not itself the means to some ulterior object. Hence our ideas about it are overgrown by feelings which are quite as unstable as its facts, and even when no specific error springs from the combination, they are always permeated and rendered turbid by a certain measure of pretence that is inevitable. To put it more clearly, all such ideas have as their centre of reference and interest, the self that craves for possession and enjoyment and so relates itself to all sorts of things in its environment. It is for the betterment of this self that they are sought and treasured, and their worth is determined with reference to their success in winning a fuller life for it by the gratification of curiosity or by the healthful exercise of its powers or by the acquisition of fame or wealth or esteem. But the self that is thus pampered is certainly not the ultimate reality that it pretends to be, nor is material or social self-seeking, however refined, identical with the quest of that inward nature which, in its completeness, repudiates every form of extraneous good. So the credentials of this self have to be challenged and its pretensions rejected before there can be any genuine advance in spiritual life. We cannot, however, hope to clear the ground in this way so long as the desires and appetites that centre round this self remain in undisputed possession of it.

Piety is enjoined, therefore, not for its own sake, nor for the felicities, here or hereafter, that it may buy, but because it is a means of attaining the serenity and freedom from prejudices which are required for the proper appreciation of spiritual truths. To the pure in heart alone is possible a satisfying vision of them. Yoga does, indeed, emphasize the view that the absolutely real cannot be comprehended without a discriminating knowledge of the world of variegated show and piecemeal apprehension, which poses as real without being so in its own right. But a just appraisal of it can be possible only after we have curbed those self-regarding passions which invest it with a false dignity and worth. If we want to look the phenomenal world in the face without illusions and without fear, we must rise to a moral altitude which is not exposed to their disturbing influence. But of the moral life thus indicated, the

staple cannot be a matter of intricate hedonistic calculation, or of authoritative interpretations of rules of conduct supposed to be prescribed from above. Its essence must lie, on the other hand, in a sustained endeavour to weed out selfishness of every description, the domination of the ego which hangs out false colours being recognised as the chief obstacle to a spiritual life.

As selfishness teaches us to be indifferent to the sufferings of others, pre-eminence is given among the virtues to abstention from everything that may harm any living creature (*ahimsā*). The prohibition extends beyond overt acts of violence to harsh words and unkind looks, since even these cause some pain, however slight, to others. And it recognises no distinction of class or order and no plea of expediency or necessity as a valid ground for ignoring it.\* Extreme provocation and a perverted sense of duty such as prompts the warrior to attack the enemies of his country or the ritualist to offer animal sacrifice are often taken to be adequate excuses for a violation of the rule. Even these, however, are but disguised forms of self-love, which appears in all its hideous nudity when people slaughter inoffensive creatures to provide food for themselves. So the virtue inculcated is, properly speaking, good-will and friendliness towards all, though particular stress is laid on its negative aspect to guard against the well-known tendency to set off some real or fancied good against specific acts of injury or injustice. To avoid these is the highest moral excellence according to Yoga, and other virtues owe their importance to the circumstance that they keep it bright.

Yoga shares, therefore, with Buddhism, Jainism and Vaisnavism the honour of preaching the essential sacredness of life. Other creeds have inveighed against the popular faith in fighting fire with fire, in smiting back when one is smitten. But they go beyond the condemnation of this hard-hearted and hard-fisted method of resisting evil to point out that all evil springs from egoism which only occasionally turns to vindictiveness and

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 31, where the devotee is told that *sārvabhauma mahāvratā*, at which he must aim, consists in not permitting any sort of consideration to interfere with the unremitting observance of the restraints here enjoined.

malice. And they reprobate not only overt acts of injustice or injury but even the abetment or extenuation of these on any grounds whatsoever.

Truthfulness (*satya*) comes next in order, and it is defined as exact correspondence of thought and speech with fact, though it follows from what has been said that thought and speech are not obligatory when their accuracy is likely to be harmful. Mendacity is not, indeed, sanctioned in any circumstance; but the Yogī is forbidden to entertain or to give expression to thoughts that are barren of good.\* And he is exhorted, therefore, to practise reticence and to limit his cogitations to things of enduring value as well as to eschew imaginative literature of every type. His aim must be to cultivate a sincere love of useful truth and to divest his mind of fanaticism and superstition, since thus alone can his words be a blessing to others.

He is asked next to avoid coveting what does not rightfully belong to him. The connection of this virtue (*asteya*) with the first is very close, and so the more thoroughly he can purge his mind of the sin of covetousness, the easier becomes for him the practice of universal kindliness. Akin to covetousness is lust, which is deprecated as involving a complete surrender of the principles that underlie the discipline of Yoga. Even lewdness in speech and thought is regarded as ruinous, because the energy that must be conserved for effective training runs to waste whenever any gratification approaches sensuality in character. To guard against such a disaster, the neophyte is advised to avoid sloth and over-indulgence in sleep and to be abstemious in his diet. In fact, he is required to cut down his wants to the bare necessities of life and to surrender what he has in excess of them for the benefit of the indigent, for thus alone can he avoid the troubles that are incidental to the acquisition and protection of property. Over-wrought creatures that pin their hope and trust to the precarious blessings which may be had in a careworn world are unfit for the arduous practice of Yoga because it requires freshness of spirit and an abundance of nerve power. Besides, throughout his pilgrimage, the devotee must pay his way by what he is and not by what he has. So

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 30.

there is no reason why he should encumber himself with material attachments, specially as they can have no place in that stable equilibrium into which he hopes to settle down at last.\*

Such are the restraints (*yamas*) that the would-be yogi must impose on himself. Besides these, he has to practise certain more active virtues (*niyamas*) such as cleanliness of body and mind (*śauca*), contentment (*santoṣa*), asceticism (*tapas*), study of the Scriptures (*svādhyāya*) and identification of the individual self with the Divine will (*Īśvarapraṇidhāna*). Physical cleanliness is prized because the health of the mind depends in no small measure on the cleanliness and vigour of its physical counterpart. But the mind must be purged at the same time of pride, narrowness and envy to ensure buoyancy and light which should distinguish the yogi's temperament from the habitual fretfulness of the worldling. Hence even more important for the proper government of his disposition is the practice of acquiescence in all that happens to him, and about which it has been beautifully observed that wise men put on leather sandals while walking along a thorny road instead of trying to cover the road itself with leather. Life is, indeed, so full of troubles that it is obviously more rational to accept them with equanimity than to attempt to overcome each and all of them. Even busy men feel occasionally in the full tide of their activity that the connection is remote and fortuitous between peace of mind and any ordering of circumstances, however favourable. But it is a vague and transitory suspicion which scarcely affects the tenor of their lives, while it becomes a regulator of conduct for the yogi because of the practice of certain austerities, like occasional fasting and reticence, which increase his capacity for endurance without distorting or injuring his mental and physical powers. This asceticism is moreover fortified and enlightened by the devotional fervour which results from a careful study of the Scriptures and of which the best fruit is the conviction that he should have no likings and dislikes and no claims to individual agency that may militate

\**Sātra* II. 34 says that the offences which the devotee is asked to avoid have their origin in covetousness, anger or infatuation and that abetment or approval of these offences is quite as bad as the offences themselves.



against the omnipotence of the Divine Will.\* Such a surrender of all pretensions in favour of the Deity is a blessed relief to the yogī, and he values it more than the thrill of passion which attends the pursuit or possession of the highest forms of external good.

Of cleanliness of the extreme form advocated in Yoga, it may be said that men who are very sensitive to internal discords come to drop one external relation after another as interfering more or less with their absorption in spiritual things. And for the same reason they try to banish from their minds those subtle shades of selfishness which appear as regret and aspiration, so that their contentment is different from that of the prudent man who acquiesces in pain and privation because he must or because he hopes that they are passing phases. They submit also to austerities under the conviction that sloth and lust cannot be kept out so long as the body is pampered in any way. But there is more in it as their asceticism is also a practical recognition of their belief that there is a real and inevitable wrongness in the noise and bustle and variety of the world outside, which must be avoided by turning back to the resources of the inner world, if peace and freedom are to be attained. And these resources are augmented and improved by a proper study of the Scriptures, for if they are constantly studied in the right spirit, they fill the mind with the vision of perfect holiness as the Lord and Enlarger of life. Men who have this vision with them at all hours cannot help attuning every thought and activity to it for once you bend sincerely before this power you can reserve nothing from its influence. This is the crowning phase of the ethico-religious discipline of Yoga, and it is attended by a remarkable sense of freedom and moral elevation due to the crumbling down of the narrow limits of selfhood. It is in very truth a shifting of the inner centre of gravity, for as a result of it the worry and trouble of existence as an individual among individuals come to be replaced by the equanimity and peace of approximation to a will which owing to its

\* Vijnāna-Bhikṣu's definition of *Īśvarapranidhāna* is that it consists in regarding every work as that of the Supreme Teacher and renouncing all claims to its results See *Yogasāra-Saṃgraha* Part 2.

freedom from all personal considerations transcends or reconciles all separateness and conflict.

To set the current of habit in the channels indicated above is frankly recognised as a task of enormous difficulty, and so when counter currents are started by imperious desires, the beginner is exhorted to check them in their wild career by the reflection that they are sure to upset the mental balance which he is striving for and thus to perpetuate error and suffering. Whenever any passion threatens to assume overwhelming proportions, he should recollect that he has submitted to the discipline of Yoga to escape from the futile excitement and worry of ordinary human life, and that he must not, therefore, encumber himself again with its cast-off paraphernalia or behave like a dog which licks up what it has spewed.\* The virtues do, indeed, retain their lustre only if they are exercised whenever any occasion arises for exhibiting them. But even constant practice may be an inadequate safeguard against the insidious growth of selfishness and attendant evils, if it is not supplemented by profound meditation on the nature of these excellences; for it is only thus that a complete picture of their remote, indirect and generally unrecognised results and of the far-reaching effects of their opposites flashes on the mind along with their obvious and immediate consequences. It is imperfect knowledge that often leads men to prefer a present though transient gain to lasting benefit. So intense contemplation like that of the yogī is required to protect him from the mischief of short sightedness. And for intense contemplation he must qualify himself by faith in the potency of his scheme and by unwavering devotion to it.

This ethical code is based on the doctrine that our moral constitution is eminently modifiable. But in the management of character, it does not set much store by the influence of positive theological creeds or of fervid and general appeals to the higher elements in our emotional nature. We have, therefore, a web of coercive principles which are remarkable alike for their sweep and stringency. The underlying idea is that steady moral advance can be ensured only by a restraining will that bases itself upon the firm groundwork of unequivocal and inelastic rules of

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, II. 33.

conduct. The formation of correct habits is also stressed, and energetic, constant and concentrated effort is enjoined as the only way of forming and fixing them. Sentiments, on the other hand are regarded as doubtful allies, because where they do not lead to appropriate actions, they relax instead of bracing the moral nerve. It is resolute practice that keeps the virtues bright.

But while mechanical aid is thus called in for the government of character, pre-eminence is given in the matter to intellectual activity on the ground that the brunt of the fight with immoral tendencies must take place in the inner chambers of the mind. There is no mystery about the management of the conflict, as it is but a systematisation of what happens occasionally in all but the most depraved minds, the correct motives being strengthened by concentrating attention on them and by pursuing continuous trains of thought about their character and consequences, while degrading impulses are weakened by reflections that make the mind turn away from them in disgust. So it is less by dwelling long and remorsefully on his shortcomings and lapses than by fixing the gaze intently on the serenity and peace of a virtuous life that the yogī advances. And when he has sufficiently advanced, he is able to meet every temptation by calling up pure and restraining thoughts. At last, even the possibility of strife disappears when he sees the operation of enduring justice in all that he enjoys or suffers and so surrenders every inclination to order his life according to his likings. This self-abnegation, consequent as it is on a strenuous and sustained endeavour for the spotlessness of virtue, is very far from the fatalism that persuades men that they have no power over their circumstances or teaches them to excuse their errors and to magnify their excellences. On the other hand, as being the last reward of a noble fight against narrowness and weakness, it is blessedness and peace flowing from a sense of complete harmony with the ideal of purity and strength.

The essentials of this moral life are absolute unselfishness, or what comes to the same thing, tender regard for every creature that breathes, respect for truth and powers of endurance equal not only to the troubles and disappointments of ordinary life but also to the exceptional privations and hardships that have to be faced in the successful performance of Yoga. It is, however,

against the spirit and scope of this ethical system to attach an expiatory value to suffering itself, and, therefore, submission to needless pain and sacrifice is discouraged.\* At the same time certain forms of asceticism are countenanced and even enjoined, because they give the required tone and temper to the constitution, and the possession of superfluous property is forbidden as it lends an overwhelming strength to temptations, thus putting an excessive strain on the springs of moral life. Luxurious ease or even habitual languor is as repugnant to it as is the craze for excitement and adventure.

Moral excellence is not, however, the final end of the yogī, but only a means to it, though certain transcendent powers are attained by those who have perfected their moral constitution. And even as a means, it ranks next to effective apprehension of the difference between the absolute and the conditioned for which, in fact, it paves the way. Still it is more valuable than mere intellectual eminence, as the highest truths are beyond the reach of those who are not strong and pure in heart. Selfishness narrows their vision and loads the evidence for them one way even within the sphere of their knowledge, so that they vainly try to see things in their true proportions or to escape the distorting influence of a corrupt imagination. It plays at the same time such a comprehensive part in ordinary human life and disguises itself under so many specious forms that they delude themselves if they assume that they can be unselfish in any particular instance without submitting to an iron discipline like that prescribed by Yoga. Unselfishness, therefore, of the type contemplated in it must be the first lesson in wisdom as well as in morals. So long again, as they do not acquire the highest regard for truth, they will be prone to settle down under the authority of old prejudices and to deliberately shut out all considerations that clash with their favourite doctrines. Besides, the discovery of ultimate truths is such an arduous enterprise that they cannot expect to have the stamina for it, if their nerve energy has been impaired by yielding to the charm of forbidden pleasures. And even when they pick up by accident valuable spiritual truths, these remain inert in their minds, because it is only a resolute and properly trained will that can quicken them into activity.

\* See *Pātañjala-yoga Darśana* II. 1 & 32.

### 8. Intellectual training

But why then should not moral excellence be regarded as an end in itself with which are associated as collateral advantages a clearer insight into truth and a firmer grasp of it ? The reason is that the moral life moves on the naturalistic plane, our duties springing from Nature's soil and requiring its co-operation for their fulfilment. Or, to put it otherwise, we do not transcend in it the duality of the subject striving and objects attained, since its development is a war with conditions which must always limit it, its ultimate triumph being but the subjection of those conditions as foreign elements to its perfected moral nature. The spirit, on the other hand, attains absoluteness only when it has returned out of every kind of otherness to be at home with itself. The attainment is, of course, an illusion, as the spirit has been always absolute and cannot be anything else. But the illusion is there, consequent on its identification with the subject or empirical ego, and the highest form of thought is required to dispel it, since morality with its consciousness of struggle against alien forces and of victory over them is still within the sphere of the relative. Our last resource, therefore, is profound contemplation (*samādhi*) in which the thinker is lost or submerged in his thought and the thought alone lives as the reality.

### 9. Physiological conditions of intellectual efficiency

It would be wrong, however, to assume that the highest efforts of thought become possible only after the perfection of the moral nature, since the virtues are firmly fixed in the mind only by means of intense and sustained meditation. Moral progress and the discipline of thought proceed, therefore, *pari passu* till the former is completed, when thought becomes doubly effective owing to the resulting serenity of the mind. For contemplation remains liable to be disturbed so long as virtue trembles doubtfully in the balance, since the forces that are arrayed against it may draw back to themselves all movement that strives upward. But even when these have been subdued, the mind may be deflected from its object by the condition of its physical envelope, to changes in which it is eminently susceptible. The influence of occasional disturbances is eliminated, indeed, by adherence to the strict rules already mentioned. There are,

however, certain general conditions which make themselves felt even after that. For instance, any position of the body becomes uncomfortable after a time, and thoughts are cut up like chaff by the rhythmic movement of respiration, though since ordinary thought is discursive, we are seldom aware of the interruption. So the yogī is required to select one out of a number of suitable postures and to practise it carefully and long, and after he has mastered it, to learn to control his breath in a manner that would make contraction and relaxation of the muscles concerned obedient to his will. The practice of these is difficult, but important results are obtained by proficiency in them. For the ability to maintain a certain position with ease through long periods of contemplation enables the yogī to bear also without injury or discomfort heat and cold and hunger and thirst, while the power of controlling his breath gives him the additional power of controlling his senses, so that they do not function when their activity is likely to distract the mind.\*

These are the conditions, moral, physical and mental, for the realisation of the highest truths through profound meditation. There is no other way of effectively apprehending them, as the knowledge obtained from text or teacher is, strictly speaking, a knowledge of the import of words relating to them, while nothing short of the directness, fulness and perspicacity of perception can light him properly on the path along which he must travel. So the yogī has to re-discover the old truths for himself, and when he is able to do that, they sweep back on him in all their glory, elevating and re-assuring him and delivering him from a host of doubts and difficulties.

#### 10. *Forms of concentration*

Of the contemplation which achieves this, three stages are marked. In the first, the mind turns back to its object as soon as it has roved, the slightest deviation being corrected thus without delay. In the second, there is uninterrupted contemplation of the object, attended, however, by the consciousness of the thinker as engaged in it, while in the third this consciousness of the thinker

\* The restraint of the senses is called *pratyāhāra*. See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* and *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana* II. 54 & 55 for a full discussion of the subject.

and his activity disappears, the self recedes to the background and the thought alone remains as if it were an independent entity. This is the highest form of concentration, and in its searching light the object stands disclosed with all its relations and features. But, generally speaking, it is not attained at once in any particular case. The yogī starts from the first stage, and as his abstraction improves, he passes through the second to this climax.\*

Passions like envy, hatred, avarice and ambition may, by temporarily eliminating all other impulses and thoughts from the mind, make its energy flow with resistless might in the direction of the object sought and thus induce a state not unlike what has been just described. It is thus possible even for men who are weak in intellect and will to be absorbed in intense contemplation. But the effect is short-lived, and the object when attained draws them with superior force towards an increasingly harsh and painful existence. The spiritual life is for those only who are single-minded in the quest of what is truest, deepest and strongest in themselves.

#### 11. *Practice of concentration*

There are some men to whom this intense search of the pure and undefiled inward nature comes easily as a result of experience in previous lives. But others have to acquire this single-mindedness while perfecting their moral nature, by long and diligent practice of any one out of a number of forms of meditation that are described below. The course has, indeed, been charted for them with a profusion of alternatives in view of diversities of aptitude and inclination. But the ultimate goal is the same for all, being rest in the Changeless and Unconditioned as the only refuge from the troubles and disappointments of phenomenal existence. This rest, however cannot be final or complete without a thorough knowledge of the nature and conditions of phenomenal life, and the courses are valuable because they attune the mind to the receipt of such knowledge.

\* The three stages are called *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*, and when taken together, they are known as *samyaama*. See *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*, III. 1-4.

Precedence is generally given among them to meditation on the nature of Divine excellence as conceived in Yoga. The Deity is regarded as having in the fullest measure all that is great and good in other creatures and consequently as beyond the need of activity for relieving any want. He is, therefore, not the creator of the universe, nor is its life bound up in any way with His existence. Yet He knows it thoroughly, specially as in His knowledge there is no colouring or bias due to the obtrusion of the personality of the knower.\* In fact, all self-regarding thought or volition is inconsistent with His eternally perfect state. Hence He is not amenable to the iron law that makes us reap the consequences, remote as well as proximate, of our actions. But He does act at the end of every cycle to deliver worthy souls from the trammels of finitude by imparting the knowledge that saves. He is, indeed, the fountain of wisdom and the preceptor of all who have taught spiritual truths to mankind. Were it not for this beneficent activity, He would be static perfection, and in spite of it, He is blessedness and peace, as He acts with perfect knowledge and without regard for Himself. The ascription of such activity to the Deity is, however, due to *vikalpa*.

Profound and uninterrupted contemplation of this Divine Providence, combined with a watchful self-restraint, makes the devotee's character approximate to his ideal. His passions are stilled as he learns to contrast his petty, tormented personality with this embodiment of strength, goodness and repose.† It is

\* A corollary to this conception of the Deity is that the union of Intelligence and Nature is not necessarily based on a misapprehension. Yoga accepts this corollary and holds, moreover, that there are beings in whom the misapprehension was never so complete as it is in us. We may approach and even equal them in excellence by proper devotion and conduct. So Yoga is not averse to any kind of theism that does not offend the rules of morality prescribed by it. In fact, *Īśvara* is the great ideal to whom the practical yogī tries to approximate. But he says at the same time that even *Īśvara* is not an ultimate principle or the final explanation of empirical existence since He too is composite so far as He is an individual.

† The devotee may start with the contemplation of the Ruler of the universe. But this conception of the Deity as touching every point of life and incessantly upholding whatever is right in it is suited only to the period of moral training when the heart has to be mailed against every form



like the action of fire on fuel, the ideal, which is the master element, subduing the baser materials to itself and then transfiguring them with its radiance. But the process may be long and interrupted. Pain and disappointment, sickness, doubt and indecision, lack of energy physical and mental, absent-mindedness, indolence, blunder, unsteadiness and a lingering fondness for the good things of the world may prove more or less serious obstacles. To overcome them, he should, instead of dwelling on the manifold aspects of the Deity, concentrate his attention on one of them, be it wisdom or serenity.\* This would give him steadiness and strength. And he should at the same time purge his mind of all sorts of unholy entanglements by learning to rejoice in the happiness of the lucky, to feel an active sympathy for the wretched, to regard spiritual progress with satisfaction wherever it may be in evidence, making light of diversities of caste and creed for the purpose and to ignore the foibles and vices of others even when they happen to injure him. Thus he would cure himself of that callous selfishness which accounts for so many human failings.

When he has steadied and purified his mind in this manner, the idea will dawn on it that he is essentially not unlike the object of his adoration, that there is a remarkable affinity between the Highest and the inmost in him. With the realisation of this great truth a new life will commence, a friendly tran-

of weakness. And so after he has won a paradise of inward tranquillity for himself, it comes to be replaced by the more intellectual idea that the Supreme Being must be self-centred and perfectly calm and thoroughly alien to the vicissitudes of life. Swāmī Hariharānanda says that this is the proper order of the contemplation of Divinity, the would-be yogī proceeding from a reverent meditation on *Saguna Īśvara* to meditation on *Nirguṇa Īśvara*. And the statement of the Swāmiji may be regarded as authoritative, as being more than the statement of a mere scholar or thinker.

\* This is what Swāmī Hariharānanda understands by *ekatattvābhyāsa*. See *Bhāṣya*, I. 32. But Vijñāna-Bhikṣu is of opinion that the expression means 'contemplation of anything that is not too subtle for easy comprehension'. See *Yoga-Vārttika* I. 32. Bhojarāja gives a similar interpretation where he says that the devotee is asked here to contemplate any object that appears suitable to him. But the words will hardly bear this meaning. Besides, it renders I. 39 superfluous. Vācaspati Miśra thinks that the *ekatattva* is the Deity, meditation on whom has been already recommended as one of the means of steadying the mind.

quillity very different from the self-conscious agitation of earlier days will pervade his nature, and he will feel that there can be no compromise between a genuine spiritual life and the shallow confusion of ordinary experience. So all that will remain to complete his disenchantment is a clear and first-hand knowledge of the factors of empirical existence.

Another method of ensuring the required composure and constancy is to manage respiration in such a way as to make it an instrument of keeping the same idea before the mind. Ordinarily it is a disturbing influence; but it may be converted into an important aid to continuity of thought by a process like the following. Breathe consciously and try to have the same thought while breathing in and out. When you have practised it sufficiently, hold the breath for a few seconds after you have breathed in and let the muscular strain involved in retaining it be concomitant with an effort to keep the same idea before the mind. The duration should increase with practice and the two efforts should come to be felt as but parts of the same comprehensive endeavour by which the air is imprisoned in the lungs and the idea prevented from sinking below the threshold of consciousness.

The subject is technical, and quite a literature has grown up on it, which describes and illustrates the various methods which have been adopted with different objects in view. But it will be enough for our purpose to refer to one of them as particularly suited to the discipline of Yoga. Breathe out slowly and think at the same time that you are expelling with the air the thoughts and desires that would otherwise crowd into your mind and set up activities in your body and thus securing an unusual calm for yourself in this noisy and busy world. Then instead of immediately breathing in, keep the air out for a few seconds and go on thinking that the same peace continues to reign in you. And when you must breathe in, let the movement be gentle and unobtrusive. Repeat the process every day till it becomes easy and natural to you and exhaling ceases to be felt as distinct from the subsequent effort to keep out the air. You will thus acquire the capacity for pinning the mind to a particular thought as long as you like even when that thought happens to be out of key with the insistent solicitations of the world outside. You will have a foretaste too of spiritual

tranquillity which is very different from the 'fretful stir unprofitable' of ordinary life.

Many, however, are constitutionally unfit for this arduous process, and some of them prefer to learn steadiness by fixing the attention on any of the sense-organs mentioned below. All other thoughts are excluded while the mind is so occupied, till at last the form or feel of the organ is all that they are conscious of. After this has been practised for some time they remain absorbed in the contemplation for two or three consecutive days without any break, and then certain remarkable results appear. If it is the tip of the nose that has been focused, then a delightful odour very unlike any that they have experienced before gladdens their hearts. Sensations of taste, touch, sight and hearing, equally superior to those that belong to our perceptual life, are experienced when the mind is riveted in the same way to the tip of the tongue, to the middle of it, to its root and to the palate respectively. This new experience has a twofold effect inasmuch as it confirms the faith of the poor-spirited in the efficiency of the yogic discipline and fosters a distaste for the goods of sense. The method is at the same time a comparatively easy way of learning to steady the mind.

Others more intellectual prefer contemplating on the heart as bathed in the transparent light of the intellect which, because it is capable of revealing the distant, the subtle and the obscure, is pictured like the steady glow that fills the limitless heavens at midday and illumines the world's remotest perspectives. Light, it is true, is an object of external perception, while the activity of thought can never be perceived in this way. But since it is difficult at first to conceive the thinking principle or self as operative without a corporeal support, the heart is regarded as the seat of this radiant energy and as aglow with it.\* This view point, however, is abandoned when it is realised that dimension and space-relations cannot belong in any sense to the thinking principle, that there is an unwarrantable stretch of metaphor in regarding it as a pervasive light or even as a centre of energy

\* By the heart is meant here that part of the body which is intimately associated with self-consciousness or that part to which we point when referring to ourselves.

sending forth far-flashing beams. The image of the heart suffused in the light of knowledge comes thus to be dropt, and contemplation to be limited to the ego as active only in time and yet able to take note of the immensities of space and the delicate sinuosities of the inner life, for even the latter appear as objects from which the knowing essence stands apart. And as this contemplation deepens, the sense of activity or movement in time is lost, and it is completely marked off, therefore, from those obtrusive mental facts which seem to exhaust our empirical existence to a grosser view. So the impression gains ground that it remains unalterably the same unlike the mutabilities within and outside the mind that it observes.

No one who has not lived continuously for some time in this phase of thought can do justice to the tranquillity and peace that attend it and refuse to be shaken by the noisiest of appeals from without. The self is felt to be enthroned on an impregnable rock which commands a panoramic view of things that cannot touch it.\* Yet further contemplation on its nature discloses that it is neither changeless nor permanent, being made up of pulses of self-consciousness which serve to irradiate the infinite richness of the world. But to focus these subtle nuclei of thought and to keep them under observation without break or digression for any length of time are feats that demand the highest effort of concentration. And the mind that is equal to these feats has thoroughly learnt the lesson of steadfastness, and is, in fact, on the threshold of the distinction between the unconditional and the conditioned.

Those who have the privilege of knowing any one distinguished for his complete detachment from secular affairs and interests may by calling to mind his calm and contented look form an idea of the tranquillity and peace that reign in his heart. It becomes clear and distinct if they dwell intently and long on it, and at last it acquires the power of moulding their character and fixing their temperament. For the reverence which it inspires

\* The name *viśokā* implies that this contemplation banishes all cares and troubles. *Vijñāna-Bhikṣu* says that of its two forms, one has the thinking principle for its object, while the other focuses Intelligence (*Yogasāra-Saṃgraha*, part 2). But here he gives up the fundamental position of Yoga, that Intelligence or *Puruṣa* can never be an object of direct observation.

comes in course of time to speak through all the dimensions of their nature, taming what is wild in it and sweetening what is bitter. But their minds approximate to the ideal, only if they remain absorbed in its contemplation to the exclusion of all other thoughts. The same result is obtained, but with greater difficulty, if the object of meditation is the serenity of a historic or legendary character, whom the devotees could never have known in their lives, but whose mind, they believe to have been incapable of being stirred by the breath of passion. The strongest and most durable impressions are, of course, those that are directly received. But it is possible for serious and refined natures to go into willing captivity to a majestic example of excellence and to reproduce it through a well-known law of sympathy in themselves.

This exercise operates in much the same way as the contemplation of Divine excellence and is separately mentioned in view of the differences among men in speculative and emotional outfit. For some of them are more profoundly affected by the magnetism of an exalted personality than by their deepest convictions about the nature of the Deity. And these may meditate with chances of greater profit on worth and dignity as embodied in the lives of saints, on goodness which could not be tempted to evil and on strength which needed no victories in the moral and material worlds because it felt no real conflict between desire and duty. There is, no doubt, an immense difference between Divine constancy and any measure of serenity or steadfastness that mortals may attain. But as already observed, the direct and continuous influence of a visible example of it is likely to be more effective in some cases in spite of the difference.

Another method which proves useful in the case of young and imaginative persons is to induce a state similar to dreaming or sleeping and to maintain it in spite of disturbing influences. In dreams the senses cease to take cognisance of their objects, but the mind remains active while in sleep both are benumbed and there is only a dim consciousness of this state of stupor. So the object is to familiarise the mind to withdrawal from those worldly cares and aspirations which haunt the waking hours of ordinary men and ultimately materialise their natures. When

the devotee has a blissful dream, he should not on waking up allow it to fade in the light of the common day, but maintain the sentiment or disposition evoked by it in spite of insistent calls on his senses from the world outside. Or he should try to prolong vacant moods not unlike sleep and resist for the purpose the force of imperious desires, thus keeping alive a sense of the aimlessness or vanity of life \*. When he is able to do these things without difficulty, he has learnt the great lesson of steadiness and acquired the power of fixing his mind on objects very different from the obtrusive facts of the external world.

The beginner may choose any one of these modes of drilling his mind to constancy and purity. The list, however, is not exhaustive, and he may select for contemplation any object that he likes, bearing, of course, in mind that on the choice he will stake his salvation. In other words, it must be such as to confirm his longing for the spiritual life and to shield him as far as possible from the distracting influences of ordinary life. But though considerable latitude is allowed in the selection of a worthy object of contemplation, there is none whatsoever in the course which he must follow after it has been selected. To live in and for the object and to die to everything else—this is the rule, and difficult as it is to adhere to, there is no getting round the difficulty. All of us pay a distant homage to serenity and fixity of purpose; but it is very different from the strenuous fight for a substantial inwardness or, what comes to the same thing, for the ability to shut out all incongruous or irrelevant impulses and thoughts.

A mind thus trained with reference to any particular object becomes capable thereby of focussing other objects as well in

\* Vācaspati Miśra refers to the art of procuring edifying dreams and says that when the devotee has a vision of the Highest Yogī in an ideal setting, he should keep it before his mind even after waking up and thus prevent the resurgence of disturbing feelings and thoughts. Similarly, when he has slept well he should keep his mind full of the memory of that refreshing sleep. See *Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, I. 38. Vijnāna-Bhikṣu thinks, on the other hand, that the devotee should have always with him the conviction that life is as unreal as dreams or as oblivious of what matters as sleep. See *Yogasāra-Saṃgraha*, part 2.

order to light them up to the inmost fibre of their being.\* And its training is said to be complete when it can explore with equal thoroughness the pettiest and the most momentous facts in the inner and outer worlds. It is then employed by the yogī to examine and value the realm of Nature in which he lives, for however dissatisfied he may be with it, he cannot rise above it without a full comprehension of its limits and contents. This then becomes the dominant task for him. But as the mechanism of Nature extends beyond his environment and into his life itself, there being mechanism in his thought and conduct, in his habits and methods, the examination of his mental constitution becomes a task equally necessary for his spiritual well-being, since he cannot strip himself of what is inessential without knowing himself with perspicacity.

### 12. Objects of contemplation

The search-light of contemplation is directed, therefore, to the various factors of phenomenal existence.† They are the world so far as it is an object of experience, the senses which take cognisance of and react on it and self-consciousness or the self which serves as an integrating principle linking up diverse experience in such wise as to convert it into an organic unity. But the world as it figures in experience is an assortment of endless varieties of sound, touch, light, taste and smell, which are reducible in their turn to five elementary types of activity in time. And self-consciousness appears in two different forms, one of them being the mere awareness of the self without any

\* It should be noted that though steadfastness of mind or capacity for resisting all sorts of distraction is the primary object of these intellectual exercises, yet they furnish incidentally the fullest information about the objects contemplated on. And some of them are from their character fitted to give the yogī all that he requires to know of phenomenal existence. Such, for instance, are *Viśokā* and *Īśvarapranidhāna*, which, if properly accomplished, reward him with perfect insight into objects of knowledge and processes of knowing and self-consciousness, and thus make him ripe for *paravairāgya* and *asamprajñāta yoga* without further examination of details. Others are not so comprehensive in their scope. But even they lead up in favourable circumstances to what is required for completing his intuition.

† Contemplation is, broadly speaking, of the gross or the subtle. Under the first are included the *mahābhūtas* or elements of perceptual consciousness and the *bāhya karanas* or senses, while the *tanmātras* or atoms and individuality and self-consciousness come under the second.

pronounced reference to the not-self, which is its inevitable setting, while in the other it is felt to be appropriative of the not-self as the object of its knowledge and the field of its activity. Five phases of existence have to be examined, therefore, for a complete survey of the phenomenal world, and the usual order of examination is from the obtrusive and complex to the forms that are simple, subtle and basal.

### 13. *Kinds of contemplation*

Contemplation, again, is of two different orders. In the first, language is a help, if not also a guide, the name of the object suggesting the image of it and the image in its turn recalling the name. Thus three different things get mixed up in a meditation of this sort, *viz.*, the object itself, the mental activity coloured by self-consciousness in which it is reproduced and the word or words by which it is designated. It differs, therefore, from ordinary reflection in being more intense and consecutive, as in both words are employed to fix ideas and probably to guide their sequence. This, however, is a drawback, as verbal symbols, however, carefully chosen, fail to call up thoroughly representative pictures of the objects thought of. And even when a purer knowledge is obtained by a higher type of meditation, it suffers by being communicated through them. In fact, revelation itself must have this defect because it is couched in expressions which are neither adequately significant nor free from extraneous associations.

The use of words is not, however, a necessity of human thinking, and the yogī tries, therefore, to rise to a level of psychic perfection on which their assistance may be dispensed with. When he succeeds, his thought ceases to be distracted or misled by its treacherous ally and attains in consequence a degree of clarity previously unknown. Mental effort too decreases because there are no longer two different and arbitrarily related things to attend to, and so self-consciousness or the knowledge of the self as active throughout the process sinks to its minimum. Thus the thought seems to be present by itself, and in that state of composure it receives no colour or bias from subjective ways of feeling and reasoning. It is, therefore, like vivid external perceptions in its directness, accuracy and wealth of detail, but it differs from them in the circumstance



that it may be about objects that are subtle, remote, or obscure.\* In fact, the immensities of space and the farthest reaches of time are open to such thought when it is sufficiently pure and intense.

It is, no doubt, a high claim to put forward in favour of contemplation, but the yogī does not lean on any form of occultism to substantiate it. He holds on the other hand that the highest and most abstruse truths are filtered from sense data by processes which are familiar to us in ordinary reasoning. But he holds at the same time that sophisticated as we are, the extent of our so-called natural knowledge is necessarily circumscribed since our interests and preoccupations mark by their emphasis its foreground and background. Our senses and our minds are taught, in fact, to act as so many organs of selection, to attend to certain aspects of the world and to neglect others just as the dominant mood requires. And our objects are reduced thereby to groups of arbitrarily chosen qualities in which we happen to be interested. It is no wonder then that our knowledge appears hopelessly inadequate when compared with the history of things considered individually and in their totality. But could we like the yogī free ourselves from the tyranny of interests and prejudices and refuse to be limited to the special lines of enquiry suggested by verbal signs, we might very considerably extend the bounds of our knowledge. And if we could at the same time perfect our power of concentration and ensure the purity and vigour of our senses by submitting to a rigorous discipline like his, we might after observing an object visualise all its movements in space and vicissitudes in time.

As already observed, the yogī does not pretend that a special faculty is vouchsafed to the devout for the acquisition of transcendent knowledge of this sort. Sense and discursive reasoning are adequate for the purpose. For the present constitution of every object is an epitome of all that it has done and undergone in the past, and in the same constitution are to be found the

\* The distinction drawn here corresponds to that between *śāvitarka* and *nirvītarka*. When the finer components of experience are focused, a further distinction appears for they may be focused with reference to their setting in time and place or without it. This distinction is expressed by the terms *śāvicāra* and *nirvicāra*. See *Yogasāra-Samgraha*, part I.

promise and potency of whatever it may become in the future, so that he, whose mind and senses are alert and attuned to truth and averse to every other consideration, may after observing it thoroughly follow all its movements and transformations in time and throughout the boundless regions of space with no better guide than the ordinary rules of inference.\* Our vision is dim, our minds move slowly and our thought is frequently interrupted, and hence we are inclined to assume that such a method of exploration must be interminably long. But it is a matter of common experience that boys learn with difficulty and after repeated failures what adults apprehend at a glance, and that even among adults there are striking differences in the rapidity and ease with which knowledge is acquired. In the history, moreover, of the human race, it has been the privilege of a very limited number of men to discover large and important facts, and we readily admit that the bounds of human knowledge would have been extremely narrow but for their superior intelligence and application. They were able to march straight and with long strides to the goal, which we could never have reached without their assistance because we walk with slow and faltering steps. It should be conceivable then that not merely particular objects but even the universe of unexhausted objectivity may lie open before a mind which develops to the fullest extent the powers that are immature or atrophied in it.†

In view of the confusion of thought that prevails on the subject, it is necessary to state with iterated emphasis that there is no mention in the yogī's grammar of thought of an

\* See *Vyāsa Bhāṣya*, III. 53.

† Four stages known as *yoga-bhūmis* are marked in this progress. In the first or *prathama-kalpika*, knowledge is still obtained with the aid of language, so that things and their names and the thoughts relating to them are not clearly discriminated. In the second which is called *madhubhūmikā* or *madhumatī*, the line is drawn between them, but knowledge remains confined to the grosser factors of experience. The third is reached when there is the fullest information about all objects of experience and so it is called *prajñā-jyoti*. And in the fourth called *atīkrānta bhāvanīya* self-consciousness and its implications are thoroughly comprehended and the mind is thus prepared for *dharmamegha-samādhi*. See *Yogasāra-Saṁgraha*, part I.

extraordinary and mysterious faculty for the intuition of the supersensual and abstruse. Whatever is known about them is derived from sense data or subjective feelings with the aid, where necessary, of reasoning from signs to things signified. But he holds that our senses might perceive much more than they usually do were they not impaired by excesses and that the movement of our minds from premises to conclusion might be faster and surer than it is were we not keenly alive to every species of disturbing influence. And he concludes, therefore, that the process of discovering new truths might be so quickened and simplified as to make the initial thought and the remotest inferences therefrom flash almost simultaneously on the mind in the form of a vision. It is true that we do not come across men of such mental acuteness and agility on the busy thoroughfares of the world. But to determine the possibilities of human intelligence from a measure of its achievements within our observation would be an unscientific use of the admittedly unsatisfactory method of inference known as simple enumeration.

It should be stated, however, that omniscience is not claimed for every one who has practised Yoga with success. It is, in fact, the attribute of the Yogī who presides over the destiny of the world and of His peers, being the reward of a study of Nature so thorough and intense as to lead ultimately to the identification of the devotee with the object of his devotion. But the point is that every yogī advances towards this ideal of universal knowledge, and that his approximation to it is commensurate with the fidelity with which he has embodied the yogic principles in his life and applied himself to the discovery of the secrets of Nature. At the same time a complete knowledge of its ways, of the Protean transformations, that is to say, of natural phenomena and their shifting relations to one another is not a *sine qua non* of deliverance. The pressing problem for him is to find out how far the life of Nature is helpful or hostile to the life that he seeks. And for a solution of it a just appraisal of the constituents of the former is all that is required. To this task, therefore, the yogī usually addresses himself without striving to discover and communicate how those factors mingle and separate in ever-changing combinations.

He relies mainly on the higher type of meditation for completing it, though he has to start with the lower, which is akin to ordinary reflection. The difference between the two has been already dwelt upon. But it may be added that while the lower type proceeds by discrimination and assimilation from the known to the unknown, the higher is more in the nature of a vision of the truth than of an inference from facts, of a vision too which fills the mind so completely as to leave no room for a sequence of ideas or a plurality of objects. A truth thus apprehended has owing to the serenity of the mind all the vividness and fulness of ordinary perception. And yet it has general validity because it is always about some constituent of the world which has been isolated for special examination from the unstable complexity of particular facts. Yoga regards it as truth of the highest order on account of its sweep, precision and clearness, and claims moreover that nothing can wipe it out of the mind or even obscure it after it has been properly learnt.\*

It is not correct to say that life is breathed in this way into the dead bones of abstract thought. The latter brings together concepts and names and separates interconnected attributes or aspects before relating them by logical links, so that the relations that it establishes are but abstracts from the concreteness of reality, which can be fully interpreted only by some form of intuition not unlike our direct knowledge of sights and sounds. Such are the truths referred to here, being instances of immediate insight into depths of reality that cannot be plumbed by the analytic reason. We reach them when we go beyond division and classification and try to image the complete actuality in an immobile mind.

This "contemplative trance" has been sneered at by some as a delusive monoideism, while others have regarded it as an amorphous or indiscriminating combination of fancies and experiences which are only loosely connected in the mind. Others, again, would define it as a kind of trans-marginal activity which

\* Vācaspati Miśra points out that though inference and communication from others can give us truths of this type, yet truths thus obtained cannot remove deep-seated errors just as no amount of discussion or reasoning can remove the illusion of those who see two moons or suffer from a defective sense of orientation. See *Tattva-Vaiśārādī*, I 1.

must justify itself by proving that its results harmonise with the context of perception and logical inference. But there is nothing, as a matter of fact, in Yoga that runs counter to ordinary experience; and if it goes farther in certain directions, the burden of proof lies on those who contend that its credentials must be rejected. If our senses are credited with the power of reporting certain facts correctly, what right have we for holding that there may not be a face-to-face presentation of other facts under the conditions laid down by the yogī ?

It has been observed elsewhere that he does not abjure the ordinary methods of ascertaining the truth, as he starts with observation and reasoning. His highest intuitions rest, in fact, on a solid basis of systematic thought (*vicāra*). But he holds that after this preliminary process is over, the mind may perceive the entire truth about the thing contemplated if only the proper composure can be secured for it, and that in this complete and direct insight there is no piecing together of details or summing up of their special implications. The process, if so it must be called, is swallowed up in the result, leaving no marks behind by which it may be retraced.

The arguments in support of this contention may be set forth thus. The mind is by nature capable of reporting faithfully all sorts of facts. But its revelations are incorrect and incomplete because passions and prejudices obscure it, while subjective constructions get mixed up with what it observes. So it should be improved and cleared and cured above all of restlessness or fidgetiness. What may be effected in this way even on a lower level is seen in correct visions of the distant and the future and close reading of other hearts by adepts. It is true that men have sometimes won eminence by such achievements without submitting to the rigid discipline of Yoga. But for valuable work in the fields of metaphysics and theology, systematic training is required. The first lesson to be learnt is that of indifference to the gratifications of sense (*indria-jaya*). The second is the habit of fixing the mind on a particular subject to the exclusion of others (*dhāraṇā* and *dhyāna*). And the third is the divine art of avoiding that individual twist which appears in its ordinary judgments (*samādhi*). If you can make it thoroughly immobile while receiving impressions, it becomes an

ideal mirror for the reflection of truth. Your ordinary experience is unduly complex, and unstable and, in fact, perpetually shifting. It gives you sometimes different and even contradictory readings of the same facts. And the reason is that it comes through a medium which is neither clear nor motionless under ordinary conditions. You require, therefore, meditative after-thought of the kind referred to, to reduce it to method and to complete it. In this meditation your mind becomes one with its object; its subjective habits (*samskāras*) and usual modifications (*vṛttis*) are for the time being lost, and so you get in full clearness and distinctness what you have so far noticed as through a veil or mist.

#### 14. *Importance of yogic contemplation*

Neither half-truths that are obtained by perception, external and internal, nor the inferences based on them can satisfy the yogī, for whatever their utility may be for the ordinary purposes of life, they are not adequate for a final solution of the riddle of this painful existence. So he seeks truths of a higher order, truths that by their completeness will enable him to get beyond the hard crust of things. It may be observed, indeed, that he may get them from others who have already taken the trouble of discovering them. But to learn such truths properly, he must rediscover them for himself, as they fail to change the outlook, which they prove to be unsatisfactory, if they are taken on trust.

So in examining the factors of the external world he focuses one after another the constituents of material things and assures himself by personal experiment of the truth of the yogic doctrine that they are always reducible to sound, temperature, colour, taste and smell. The reason disappears, therefore, for setting an extravagantly high value on some of them or for regarding others with intense dislike and even disgust. Similar considerations occur, indeed, to most of us, and yet we are passionately fond of some objects and extremely averse to others, while the yogī has no such inveterate likings and dislikes. This difference in attitude is due to difference in intensity and persistence between our unsystematized thought about them and his realisation of their nature. He may value some objects more than

others on account of their superior utility or agreeableness, but it is impossible for him to look upon the former with a superstitious eye of love or veneration and upon the latter with an equally superstitious feeling of hatred, as he perceives, and not merely assumes or infers that they are not radically different in genesis and constitution. Besides, we relegate our theoretical knowledge to the background whenever it happens to clash with our passions or interests. The yogi's conviction too may be clouded occasionally by the resurgence of old ways of thinking and feeling. Repeated meditation however, on the nature of external reality gives it strength enough to destroy these habits root and branch, so that however attractive a thing may be to others, to him it is but a special combination of the ingredients that enter into the make of the most repellent.

He does not stop here in his analysis of material things, as a closer observation of the constituent sensations discloses the remarkable fact that each of them is due to the synthesis below the level of ordinary consciousness of sensations much more elementary, sensations which have no spatial accent and no differences of quality, duration and intensity. The broad distinctions still remain between sound, temperature, light, taste and smell; but the endless diversities within each division are felt to be due to difference in the number of homogeneous units that combine to produce them. The light unit is thus seen to be neither red nor green nor of any other tint and the taste unit appears to be neither of sweetness nor of bitterness or acidity. \* Hence though ordinary perceptual life is rich in emotional colouring, all emotional significance disappears from the elements of which it is composed.

The causes, again, of these minute sensations are found to be activities in time but not in space, so that their externality is interpreted as no more than otherness or independence of the perceiving mind. But as mental facts are the only examples of

\* Two methods of focussing these units (*tanmātras*) are mentioned by Swāmī Hariharānanda. One of them is to reduce the extensity or duration of a sensation to a point beyond which it disappears, while the other is to let the sense concerned settle into a state of composure just above insensibility. See *Pātāñjala-Yoga-Darśana*, I. 44.

movement in time alone, the yogī concludes that in these elements of experience a superior mind furnishes directly the materials out of which is woven the limitless and infinitely varied tapestry of the world. Or to put it otherwise, the manifestations of external force, its reflections in our sense data turn out to be hints for elaboration from a Spirit to kindred though inferior spirits in language that is common to all of them. Philosophical speculation has sometimes arrived at a conclusion like this. But with the yogī it is not merely a matter of interpretation and inference ; he *sees* the world to be so constituted.

From a study of the energy that sets up activities in his mind, he passes naturally to an examination of those activities, especially as he has found nothing extramental in the operation of that energy. And in this enquiry he leaves aside as irrelevant, details relating to the structure and functions of the sense-organs and other parts of the body that cooperate with them. It is mental processes and their results that are exposed to the light of contemplation, and the organs do not figure in them. The eye or the ear forms no part of sights or sounds, and if they are necessary for perceptual consciousness, equally so are the objects which wake them up and with which alone they may be classed. But in every sight and sound the subject does figure, for there can be no experience that is not owned. The sense of ownership may not be explicit in every case but it is there even when eclipsed by the vividness of what is perceived. And as the yogī focuses sensations of different kinds one after another, he is able to observe that in each of them the self goes out as it were to take possession of what is presented. He feels also the functional tone retained by his senses even when there is nothing to stir them to activity. And he interprets it as the readiness of his self to receive in one or another of five different ways any call that may come to it from outside. In self-consciousness, therefore, he finds the key to the ultimate nature of his diversified perceptual life. Moreover as he shifts his gaze to other forms of mental activity, he discerns that the highest and most elaborate products of thought are developments of self-consciousness like the sense data out of which they are filtered. It fills him with a sense of power by dispelling the common prejudice that human beings are born into a world which



sways them on every side and over which they have no control. And a saner view thenceforth takes possession of his mind, viz., that his own constructive energy determines the nature of his experience while what is outside him merely furnishes the occasions for its exercise.

He passes next from the contemplation of this active, aggressive self to that of the self in comparative repose. All of us are more or less self-conscious, and we are often so in a bad sense. But the self that we are aware of is a very complex thing comprehending, to use the language of an American psychologist, the material, social and spiritual selves besides the empirical ego. The condition of our physical organism, our relations to our fellow-creatures and the state of our worldly affairs are reflected in its make-up, and it is affected to an almost equal extent by our antecedents and prospects. So it is very different from the nude essence of our phenomenal being to which the yogi limits his contemplation.

But in spite of its nudity, it appears to be a greater thing than the selves, coloured and defined, that we are familiar with. For he finds it to be the matrix of every type of experience, possible and actual, the theatre of infinite possibilities and not merely the theatre, as it furnishes also the active principle which might translate them into facts. These possibilities seem, no doubt, greatly restricted for human beings by acquired modes of thinking, feeling and acting and by attachment to a particular environment. But he feels now that if they could get back to this original, unsophisticated self-consciousness, all sorts of knowledge and activity would be possible for them and that if they followed then the course of Nature with full comprehension and absolute acquiescence, they might attain to a position like that of the exalted Spirit who presides over the destiny of the world.

The contemplation of this principle is marked accordingly by a serenity and exaltation unknown to every other mental process. Yet the yogi sees at the same time that it is relative and complex as the ghost of a non-ego clings to it in spite of its apparent simplicity. And he feels also that owing to its entanglements, it is like the centre of a vortex never completely free from unrest and mutation. Hence the usual ascription of

unchangeableness and simplicity to it is recognised at once at this stage as the primary illusion of which all subsequent experience is a kind of development. This new truth flashes on him like a new point of view or rather it casts a flood of light over the entire perspective, for he realises now that everything in his world up to the central fact of self-consciousness shines by a light reflected from a source which is necessarily beyond observation, but to which the self as being the basal element in experience is nearer than anything else.

A conception like his which associates the Absolute with the relative without confusing them is not altogether unknown to other systems of philosophy. But what is peculiar is the distinctness with which the Absolute is conceived as the goal of all rational efforts. And it is due to the sustained intensity of his meditations on the nature of existence. As he ponders over the conditions under which he has to live, he is struck by their mutability and incompleteness. And his dissatisfaction increases when he turns his gaze inwards, for he finds the same incompleteness and mutability entering into the substance of his life and developing there into an inconsequence, a division, on account of the disparity between his inmost longing and the restricted scope afforded to it in the phenomenal world. An interminable series of changes cannot content him, because change is never an object in itself. Progress is almost equally unsatisfactory, if it is a succession of movements towards a goal which may be approached but never reached. And even a selfish other-worldliness cannot be his, for he knows that in that other world there can be but a re-enactment on a relatively wider scale and with probably certain modifications of the process which he knows as life in this world. He longs, therefore, for a new kind of being which will transcend this, that and everything else on the finite plane and will consequently be neither exposed to attack nor dependent for help on what is outside it.

His meditations convince him that this absoluteness must belong to the Reality to which he owes his existence as an individual. The more does he reflect on the manifestly transitional character of his experience, on the admitted uncertainty of its aims and inadequacy of its means and on the circumstance that

everything is relative, contingent and composite in it including even the fundamental element of self-consciousness, the surer becomes his faith in a reality beyond, which is immutable, timeless, self-dependent and essentially simple.\* Unrest and activity are felt to be foreign to its nature since they point at their best to a consummation yet to be achieved and are, therefore, incompatible with its completeness. And as the condition of all sorts of experience, it appears to be beyond the relativity that attaches to the subject and the object in them, and so it does not lend itself to perception or require an extraneous object for being what it is. You may call it consciousness of itself as peace and completeness, but you must bear in mind that this peace is not the reward of strife and this completeness is not the result of any summation of finite and incomplete things. The truth, however, is that even the yogī cannot give adequate expression to his ideas about the Absolute, as he is here face to face with the ineffable.

There come to us occasionally serene and blessed moods in which we think of the ultimate source of phenomenal existence in this way. But our reflections never have that dazzling clearness which belongs to the vision of the yogī, as we never realise like him the inadequacy and inconsequence of this existence. Besides, we lack his steadfastness, and our uncertain minds acquiesce in it with a fatal facility even after the truth has been brought home to us. Hence we settle down under the comfortable belief that the reality cannot be altogether unlike the veil of appearances which we directly perceive and turn to account. But the yogī sees clearly the abyss that stretches between the two, and in his disciplined mind the truth acquires a firmness of grip that nothing can relax. It acquires

\* This positive conviction is necessarily expressed in the form of negative propositions like 'I am not' 'Nothing is mine' and 'there is no ego'. But the form has sometimes misled Western scholars. Cousin thinks, for instance that they enunciate "an absolute nihilism, the last fruit of scepticism". Davies, on the other hand, is perfectly right when he points out that to Sāṅkhya and Yoga the soul is the most real of all things—self-existent, never born and never dying. See *The Sāṅkhya-Kārikā of Īśvara-Krishna*, pp. 96, 97. The propositions mean—Intelligence is not the individual, nothing belongs to it as a possession and it does not exist in time.

also a distinctness hardly short of what we have in vivid objective perception, because the passions never cloud his view. So there is all the difference in the world between his sure hold of it and its dim and passing reflection on our facile minds.

### 15. *Practical aspect of Yoga*

We are dissatisfied, in fact, with particular phases of experience and strive to rise above them by improving the conditions under which we have to live. And when our efforts are futile, we seek solace in the pleasant doctrine that things will right themselves somehow and give us all that we desire in another world. So we have no quarrel with life in general, and we would not surrender the thoughts that wander through eternity or the attempts to scale heights yet unscaled, though we dislike the low plane to which our experience and activity are confined at present. But the yogī realises that the life of nature on any plane, however exalted, must fall short of his highest aspiration, and he distrusts the mind too as the central thing in it, the *primum mobile* which sets in motion the variegated show. He contrasts its ceaseless movements and its equally ceaseless mutations with the repose of the Absolute and he decides to give it up with its lights and shades in order that he may earn that repose.

This decision is, in fact, only the practical aspect of the realisation of the difference between the mind and the Reality beyond, which remains throughout identical with and sufficient unto itself.\* And it furnishes also a correct measure of the difference between our weak-kneed pessimism and the firm conviction of the yogī that empirical existence of every type is incompatible with genuine spirituality. There is no patient acquiescence on his part in pain, error and superstition. He does not feel shipwrecked and 'inclined to take the nearest port at the end of his discipline and meditations. And if he elects to disencumber himself of the bulky and useless luggage of experience, he does so in order to get ready for a voyage beyond the rough seas of the world. There are, again, no poor-spirited

\* See *Yyāsa-Bhāṣya*, 1. 2, where the mind is said to be disgusted with its highest achievement and to decide to put a stop to its futile labours,

regrets for what he parts with as he has weighed every bit of it in the balance and found it wanting. Nor has he any misgivings about the nature of what may be in store for him at the close of the voyage. So pessimism, rightly understood, cannot be said to be the last word with him. To us he seems, indeed, to be heading for a catastrophe, for a faint and joyless being, a blank, featureless thing, if it is a thing at all. But we have not resolved to cut ourselves away from our individual moorings, and so we judge everything by what we get on the naturalistic plane. He appears, therefore, to be making do with what is only the phantom of a dream. But as the yogi would put it, we have learnt to take the shadow for the substance and so the substance seems quite shadowy to us.\* It is true that even he cannot perceive it directly, but that is because, as the source of all perception, it cannot be an object of perception itself. As he realises, however, the contingency and relativity of all other things, it becomes for him in hope and trust not divorced from reason the most certain Presence.

But does not experience appear to offer him more than itself in vouching for a reality beyond its province ? This apparent anomaly is explained by the circumstance that two contradictory principles meet in him as in other individuals. One of them is the principle of becoming or appearance, which is by itself a mere potentiality, though it develops into one transitory thing after another in endless succession because it is defined by the other principle of which consciousness is a limited and distorted reflection. His life is doubtless a matter of becoming, a series of manifestations, but it could not be what it is without the vivifying light just referred to and of which the source may be roughly described as consciousness without the limitations imposed by its object or implied in the sense of individuality.

\* *Para-vairāgya* or distaste for every thing belonging to empirical existence is characterised in *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, 1. 16 as the perfection of knowledge, and it is said to be next door to isolation (*kaivalya*). *Vijñāna-Bhikṣu* says that *dharmamegha-samādhi* or uninterrupted apprehension of the difference between Intelligence and appearances prepares the mind for it, and that when the mind has completely learnt the lesson of indifference, even this apprehension is given up as no longer necessary and is followed by *asam-prajñāta-yoga* or abstraction from the duality of experience.

That consciousness is always of finite appearances or limitations is not a conclusive proof of its being produced by them, and the yogī holds on better grounds the opposite doctrine that appearances, whatever they may be of, cannot exist as such unless they are taken cognisance of. So reflective analysis bears indirect testimony to two different but related principles, which as being ultimate cannot be appearances or objects of apprehension, though from their association arise all sorts of appearance, of which the ego or self-consciousness is always the basal and, therefore, the most important element.

The yogī sees farther than we do in such matters because he has purged his mind of interests and preoccupations. Our distractions are endless and our predicament is not unlike what is set forth in the following homely illustration. If an opaque body comes between you and your light, it excites your curiosity because it is new, and while noticing its size and shape, you do not look for the light that is beyond. If myriads of such bodies cross your field of vision treading on one another, they arrest attention so completely as to make you forget the light that they have intercepted. Yet you are never wholly without it, as you cannot observe their contours and distinguish them from one another in its absence. Such, indeed, is your attitude and mine when we assume that the objects which claim our notice exhaust reality and so dismiss as incomprehensible what is beyond them. But the yogī sees clearly enough that their existence is conditioned by what is inscrutable for the time being, just as the appearance of the opaque things is by the light that they obstruct. And on turning his gaze inwards, he notices the same relativity in the case of the mind, since it is an object of knowledge like them and like them, again, is full of movement or mutation.

The realisation of the difference between the mind and the source from which it derives its light and life is the highest form of knowledge according to Yoga. And it is the grand privilege of Nature to lead the benighted individual along the path of experience to it. Here, in fact, is the high import of life, which without it would be futile and even worse, as its course, whatever the experience on the way may be, is decidedly downhill from the sprightliness of childhood to the infirmity

of old age and the struggle with death. The development of this all-important apprehension and its conative complement has been divided into the following stages.\* The first is the conviction that all external goods are productive of suffering, immediate or remote. The second is the assuring thought that the passions and prejudices which made the yogī seek them have suffered attenuation so that it is no longer necessary to keep a strict and constant watch over them. The third is the glorious vision of perfect freedom and repose, which puts an end to all obstinate questionings and doubts. The fourth is profound and unalterable faith in the knowledge of the difference alluded to as the one means of attaining that goal. The fifth is the impression that the mind has completed its task by leading the individual through enjoyment and suffering to renunciation of everything that is foreign to his inmost nature. The sixth is the forecast that the constituents of the mind must now drop and disappear in their cause, having ceased to be useful, and that like boulders which have rolled down a steep hill-side they will never regain their position of eminence or, to put it otherwise, organise themselves for a fresh set of experiences. And the seventh and last is the discovery that the highest and the inmost are identical, that limited activities like those of the mind are alien to its nature and that it shines by its own light and is absolutely pure and self-sufficient.

But the drama of man's bondage and his eventual freedom does not close with this saving knowledge, though it prepares for the denouncement by furnishing the motif for the dissolution of the mind. There is, according to Yoga, a touching display of the mind's powers just before the final collapse, for when it awakes to the distinction between appearance and reality, it may, if it chooses, attain omniscience and along with omniscience transcendent powers over the phenomenal world. The past and the future, the subtle and the remote will then stand revealed before it with all the vividness that belongs to the present and the palpable. And it will require no instruction and no laborious process of inference for comprehending them, as in comprehending

\* See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* II. 27 for the seven divisions of what has been called the border-land (*prāntabhūmi*).

the nature of appearance it has shaken off those subjective customs of thought that cut up the truth into fragments of knowledge and interpose the barriers of space and time to keep its objects apart from one another.

#### 16. *Inhibition of dualistic consciousness*

But this unlimited knowledge of natural phenomena and the unlimited power of harnessing their forces that goes along with it are rejected by the yogi as hindrances to the spiritual life. He rejects also the knowledge that has set him on the right track, as he cannot have it unless his mind swings pendulum-like between the two extremes of fleeting appearances and the reality which is beyond the reach of change and decay.\* It is the composure and adequacy of this reality, its immaculate simplicity and freedom from vicissitudes that he yearns for, and to attain them he inhibits every form of mental activity and casts away the store of information that he has picked up on the wayside of time. He is not completely successful in this daring attempt as soon as he makes it, since old habits of thought and feeling are not easily unlearned, and old experiences insist on reappearing as recollections. But strenuous and repeated practice enables him to wipe them out, till at last not a vestige of ordinary consciousness is left behind to remind him of what he has been.† The chain is thus snapped which bound him to a world of alien manifestations. He has been moving so long from one compromise with them to another. But he now returns from all sorts of otherness to be at home with himself.

\* The omniscience that results from a clear apprehension of the difference between Intelligence and everything else is called *prasamkhyāna*. When the seeker after Reality is tired of omniscience too so that his discrimination is complete and abiding, the perfect composure of his mind is called *parama-prasamkhyāna* or *dharmamegha-samādhi* because in that state the mind is saturated with the highest form of knowledge which drops like a gentle shower on it. In fact, the mind is reduced in that state to an unintermittent consciousness of the difference between Intelligence and itself. See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya* and *Pātañjala-Yoga-Darśana*, IV, 29.

† It is not implied that strain or effort or the sense of it is in evidence up to the last, for there must be intense self-consciousness so long as effort is present. Effort is required, in fact, only for checking the mind as soon as it is inclined to rove along old and familiar paths. But whenever the mind



This last attempt of the yogī seems little less than slow suicide to us, because we never rise above the endless variety of limited and individualised expressions of Nature. Our life is kept in continual motion by a constant supply of new materials, and so we suppose that all life must cease when this supply is cut off. But in the spiritual life there can be no such dependence, nor can the heir to it view with satisfaction the prospect of 'ever climbing up the climbing wave', for at every stage there will be the stinging consciousness of some sort of imperfection. If he must be surrounded always by the spectres of time, then no matter what his experiences may be here or hereafter, he can have no chance of a truly spiritual existence. He repudiates, therefore, his individuality and leaves aside his likings and dislikes on the ground that they are always confused and inadequate. Thus when the highest lesson has been learnt and the last fight with illusions and their progeny of hope and fear, of love and hate is over, his mind attains a tranquil brilliance not quite unlike the consummation which he has been seeking throughout.\*

Yet even in this stage there is a vestige of activity or unrest and a relic of that duality which belongs to all experience. So this too is inhibited, and then the mind is said to become exactly like its prototype. But strictly speaking, it disappears as it can have no existence apart from the activities of which it is composed.† Its dissolution does not, however, affect the principle

is stilled in this way, there remains only the minimum of self-consciousness. And as the composure deepens, the slight activity involved in self-consciousness tends to disappear and its shadowy back-ground of time and space to fade away, till at last there remains only absolute consciousness. Absolute consciousness is ordinarily obscured by elements belonging to phenomenal existence, elements, that are not completely absent even from self-consciousness. When the last of these excrescences disappears as a result of complete inactivity, then alone is the goal reached. But lapses are almost inevitable even after that unless the strength of old habits is completely overcome by repeated effort.

\* *Asamprajñāta Yoga* or transcendence of the duality of even the highest forms of knowledge gives a foretaste of the free life of Intelligence. So it is to be distinguished from the mere cessation of mental activity (*mudha*). In fact, it is different from complete freedom only because the latent impressions of previous experience still remain to be wiped off.

† See *Vyāsa-Bhāṣya*, III. 55 and IV. 31. There is some difference of opinion about the force of the quotation from *Āitareya Aranyaka* in the

to which it owed its origin and development, just as the disappearance of clouds does not intensify the brilliance of the sun. So the individual's impression is given when the final stage of Yoga is characterised as freeing the principle from the encumbrance that dimmed its lustre, just as it is from the view-point of the observer below that clouds are described as quenching the light of the sun. The plain truth then is that the individual alone is affected by the change in both the cases.

The yogi's ideal cannot rouse the enthusiasm of men who hope that their personality may be saved out of the general wreck that death threatens to be. And it shocks those who would take over the border if possible their favourite pursuits and pastimes and aspire only to wider vision and greater practical efficiency. He fails, moreover, to give anything like a coloured map of the future to which he points, because the entity to which he would reduce himself refuses to be bounded by the familiar limits of sensuous existence.\* In fact, endeavours from the outset to break the barricades of sense and thus to attain what may be called the universal character of the spirit. So he does not expect to carry with him those whom he regards as spiritually lame or halt. But even to them he would speak of the progressive increase in peace that attends the surrender one after another of the material and mental goods for which they are so full of concern.

### 17. *Résumé*

The foregoing paragraphs give a very inadequate account of the pilgrim's progress along the path indicated by Yoga. But every account must be more or less inadequate, as words can but

latter. Swāmī Hariharānanda's interpretation is as follows : When *dharma-megha-samādhi* has completely destroyed the afflictions, a return of phenomenal existence becomes as impossible as it is for the blind to pierce jewels or for the fingerless to thread them or for the neckless to wear the ornament or for the tongueless to praise its beauty.

\* Intelligence or *Purusa* is said to be *avānmānasagocāra* or beyond word and thought. And if sometimes He is characterised as *svābhāsa* or lighting Himself up or as being both subject and object in one all that is implied is that Intelligence cannot become unintelligent or insentient when separated from the finite objects of knowledge that appear to colour and limit it. So it is a mistake to suppose that He is only a rarefied form of self-consciousness.

half reveal the truth about it. It is no easy task to describe fully and exactly even a common object of perception. How very difficult then must it be to describe experiences which are far from being common ! Besides, many of these experiences are of supersensual things, and they cannot be given without a liberal use of analogies, metaphors and parables, which, however, have obvious drawbacks. Still it may be possible to form some idea of the yogic discipline and its object if the foregoing details are taken with the broad outline as presented below.

Human beings are born to misery, and so the longing to be rid of it is universal and deep as life. In fact, human ingenuity is being always taxed to the uttermost in devising means of escape from it. But though ordinary mortals shape and reshape their programme according to the exigencies of the hour, yet broadly speaking these expedients fall under three heads with reference to which men may be divided into three classes. There are those who pin their faith to external goods, hoping by their means so to modify the conditions of their lives as to rule out misery from their experience. Others rely mainly on the sanctions and promises of religion, and as they find desert and reward to be widely separated on earth, they assume that Divine justice will make the two commensurate in a glorious existence beyond death. But others more spiritual in their disposition and outlook distrust these schemes of material and social self-seeking here or hereafter and suspect that misery may be due to foreign elements which get related to the enduring reality in them by way of experience. Discourse with kindred spirits (*śravaṇa*) and reflection on the evils of life (*manana*) confirm their suspicion and strengthen their resolve to simplify their nature by casting off whatever is adventitious in their compositions.

But the accidentals cannot be sifted from the essential unless it is known with perfect certitude what these accidentals are. And for this a comprehensive and impartial examination of all that is reflected in their consciousness is required. They are not, however, immediately ripe for such an undertaking, as personal likings may still vitiate their observations and their conclusions may have individual twists. For clarity of vision, they must, therefore, purge their minds of selfishness, and they try to do it by the practice of asceticism (*tapas*) by devotional exercises

(*svādhyāya*) and by self-abnegation (*Īśvarapraṇidhāna*). It is an arduous task, but it overshadows in importance every other task at this stage, and they nerve themselves for it under the conviction that spiritual progress must be impossible without this ethical preparation. Asceticism includes charity, truthfulness, continence, physical and mental cleanliness, equanimity, freedom from covetousness and distaste for everything beyond the bare necessities of life. By devotional exercises are meant reverent study of the Scriptures and recital of holy texts with full comprehension of their import, while self-abnegation is taken to imply complete acquiescence in what appears to be the will of God and surrender in His favour of all claims to merit on account of good deeds.

They cultivate at the same time the habit of keeping their minds fixed on any particular object in spite of distractions. This is quite as important as accuracy of judgment, since even restless minds have occasional glimpses of the truth, but are none the better for the fitful enlightenment. The habit of concentration is best acquired by sustained meditation on the completeness and serenity of the Divine nature. And when it has been perfected, the object of contemplation, whatever it may be, fully occupies the mind, to the exclusion even of the commonest feelings. It becomes thus like a narrow but deep and rapid stream flowing with resistless force and covering everything that lies in its channel. Nothing is too subtle or too complex for it, nor is it liable to fits of depression like the minds of men who have impaired their faculties by irregularity or intemperance.

Thus equipped and with absolute singleness of purpose, they apply themselves to an examination of the various factors of phenomenal existence, starting from the palpable and complex and advancing step by step to what is subtle and elusive. And the elementary caution illustrated in their line of enquiry is observed also in the manner in which they attack their problems. These are subjected in the first instance to a searching examination from all relevant view-points, and words are carefully employed to guide and mark the successive steps towards a solution. But when the solution has been reached by the fullest use of these severe intellectual methods, words are abjured owing to their misleading associations and mental activity is reduced to

a minimum to shut out side-issues and remote implications. And in the extraordinary tranquillity which follows, the entire truth about the fact in question flashes on the mind in the way of immediate knowledge, that is to say, without conscious piecing together of details or clear recognition of the steps by which they have been discovered. The analytical process is thus swallowed up in its result, which is complete and enduring insight, for a truth thus realised is never lost.

The purest or most exact knowledge of the nature of phenomenal existence (*prasamkhyāna*) is obtained in this way, and it is next-door to the realisation of the difference between the infinitely varied and mutable facts of experience and the immutable principle of which they are the fleeting and partial reflections (*param prasamkhyāna*). The distinction cannot be quite new to the seekers after truth as some faint image of it must have guided them throughout the enquiry. But there is nothing to obscure it now, and so the mind remains full of it. Yogīs know no higher form of meditation than complete and uninterrupted absorption in this thought (*aviplavā vivekakhyāti*), and they call it *dharmamegha-samādhi* because it gives the clearest idea of the Absolute (*ātmadarśana*) by contrasting it with all that is relative. The idea appears, indeed, to be mainly negative in character when properly set forth, as in the propositions, the true Self is not the body or anything that may be claimed as a possession, nor is it the individuality or aggregate of impulses, faculties and instincts, nor again can it be identified with self-consciousness or the ego that is perceived to exist from moment to moment as a link between successive mental states, but it is the presupposition of all these and is, therefore, timeless and incapable of being directly known. This series of negations has, however, a determinate message for them, a message which bears fruit in the form of *paravairāgya* or the decision to give up everything on the personalistic or empirical plane, not excluding the thought which has inspired it.\*

\* All great writers on Yoga have defined *dharmamegha-samādhi* clearly; but some of them have failed to draw the line between it and *paravairāgya*. Swāmi Hariharānanda suggests that the former is the highest form of intellection while the latter is the highest form of activity. See *Sāṅkhya-Tattvāloka*, section 1 and Rāmānanda Yati's *Maṇiprabhā*, IV. 29 on this subject.

The practical aspect of Yoga consists of the following stages, which exhibit in their order a certain measure of correspondence with the course of its speculations. All longing for acquisition and activity is stilled in the first instance, and when this complete detachment from secular interests becomes easy through practice, the effort involved in the inhibitory resolution is given up as unnecessary. There is left behind, therefore, the consciousness of the self as the passive recipient of impressions from without, impressions which no longer arouse feelings of love and disgust. The next stage consists in turning away from the world of objects, so that what remains is bare self-consciousness with the seeds of every variety of thought and activity and of every shade of feeling latent in it. At last, even this consciousness of the ego as existing in time and liable to transformation is surrendered for the completeness and repose of the Absolute.

But they do not become assured possessions with the first inhibition of consciousness, for even then mental activity continues below the threshold and breaks in on the hard-won peace whenever there is a slackening of the tension required to keep it down. The strain is, moreover, great at the outset so that it cannot be kept up for any length of time, while impressions of past experience never throw away their chance of emerging out of subliminal obscurity.\* Hence the yogi nerves himself for frequent tussles with them, perseverance being recognised as the key to success here as in other stages of the yogic discipline. And he is amply rewarded at last when inhibition becomes a habit strong enough to prevent a relapse into our ordinary consciousness or, as Yoga would put it, when traces of restraint neutralise effectually traces of all previous thoughts and desires. The last fight is thus fought in the lower chambers of the mind, and as the result of it the entire mental structure suffers disintegration, for as it is sustained by activities

\* Vijñāna-Bhikṣu points out that *nirodha* or inhibition of facts of consciousness does not mean dissolution or even cessation of activity, as it leaves traces behind. It is really movement away from objects of experience as consciousness is movement towards them. See *Yogasāra-Samgraha*, part I.

This is a correct statement so far as the act of *nirodha* is concerned. But in the *niruddha* state there is no movement or tussle. It comes again when there is a resurgence of empirical consciousness.

it must crumble to pieces when those activities are indefinitely suppressed.

But the yogī may, before winning his final release in this way, decide to re-appear in flesh and blood to help suffering humanity. And then he returns without the primary illusion and, therefore, without the possibility of being tainted by experience. But what service can he render to his race ? He cannot by taking up arms against the boundless sea of troubles end them, as they arise out of the superstition, ignorance and perversity of his fellow-creatures. Nor can he make them happy by offering them all that they desire, since they are compounded of needs and aspirations that refuse to be completely satisfied. So he comes with the message of enduring and ineffable peace and freedom to be won by renunciation of all that is accidental and perishable.

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*A Study of Yoga* by Dr. Ghosh received deep appreciation from scholars in India and abroad.

## OPINIONS OF DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS

on *A Study of Yoga*

by Dr. Jayneswar Ghosh

It is of great value, and a pleasure to read even for the style. But much more important is the question of the thought. I always value reading the thoughts of one who really understands what he is talking about, even when the point of view is very different .... I like very much what you say about William James and other Westerners. They are quite incapable of getting at Indian thought at first hand, and some of their objections to Yoga apply to Western monasticism and they do not know much about that. On page 176 you oppose Prof. Radhakrishnan. I attacked him on the same point when I reviewed his book. But I thought he was merely introducing Grabe's view in order to appear up-to-date.

—E. J. THOMAS, Cambridge University,  
July 2, 1934.

It puts in the most attractive form the case for the philosophy and the practices of the true yogin, and is, I think the most persuasive apology produced of recent years for the merits of the Yogadarshana. Those of us who do not share your conclusions can fully appreciate the ability of your argument and exposition.

—A. BERRIEDALE KEITH, Edinburgh University  
July 7, 1934.

It is an interesting and earnest quest of truth.

—L. D. BARNETT, British Museum, London  
July 12, 1934.

It is a delightful book which one reads with great pleasure because one feels always that you know thoroughly what you are writing about and also know how to write in order to make your views clear and intelligible.

—STEN KONOW, Oslo, July, 14, 1934.

I have great pleasure in acknowledging, with many thanks, the receipt of a copy of your very interesting 'Study of Yoga.....' which seems to me to be a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Yoga.

—M. WINTERNITZ, Prague, July 30, 1934.

